

The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport and the Hybrid Athlete

A Comparative Case study of the Elite Taekwondo Athlete in China and Norway

Jo Flottorp Ness



Chinese Society and Politics
Supervisor: Mette Halskov Hansen

Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages

UNIVERSITY OF OSLO

Spring 2015

The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport and the Hybrid Athlete

A Comparative Case study of the Elite Taekwondo Athlete in China and Norway

Jo Flottorp Ness

Master thesis
Department of Culture Studies and Oriental Languages
Faculty of Humanities

University of Oslo
May 2015

© Jo Flottorp Ness 2015

The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport and the Hybrid Athlete

Jo Flottorp Ness

<http://www.duo.uio.no/>

Printed at Aktiv Print & Kopi AS, Oslo.

Abstract

This thesis is a comparative study of elite taekwondo athletes in China and Norway and is primarily based on interviews with 25 former and active Chinese elite athletes and one coach at the Beijing Sports University (BSU). In Norway, I interviewed four taekwondo athletes, the assistant, and the head coach of the Norwegian National Team.

At the BSU I investigated the components of rules and regulations, physical punishment and self-criticism, and how the athletes coped living under this rigid system. In Norway I mapped out the surveillance structures that monitors the athletes weight and health.

This thesis can contribute to a new understanding of the processes of transformation and conformity of the elite athlete. The transformation includes actors, structures, rules and regulations reaching outside of the *Disciplinary Technologies of Sport* associated with the training facility.

Acknowledgements

First of all I want to thank my supervisor Mette Halskov Hansen for guiding me through the challenging and ruthless process of writing this thesis. I also want to thank Pang Cuiming for pushing my academic boarders, as well teaching me a great deal about academic writing during my first year as a post-graduate student.

Many thanks to my family and friends for moral support. A special thanks to my twin brother Lars Flottorp Ness, who indirectly is a part of this thesis, as a twin-brother and a training partner for 13 years.

Also thanks to Yeh Shu Yi, Yeh Shu Fang and Tang Qi Yan who helped me transcribing the interviews.

Last I want to thank my Chinese friends, former and active athletes at Beijing Sport University for making it possible of conducting interviews. It has been an amazing re-union of old and new friends. Without them, it would be impossible to write this thesis.

All remaining errors and inconstancies are my own,

Jo Flottorp Ness

Oslo, May 26th, 2015

Table of Contents

Abstract.....	4
Acknowledgements.....	5
1. Introduction.....	8
1.1 Thesis Statement.....	
1.2 Research Status.....	
1.2.1 The Sociology of Sport and Foucault.....	9
1.2.2 The Elite Athlete.....	10
1.3 Outline of Chapters.....	
2. Research Methodology.....	12
2.1. My Background as a Former Elite Raekwondo Athlete and Coach.....	
2.2. Qualitative Research: A case study of Chinese and Norwegian Elite Taekwondo Athletes.....	
2.3. Interviews.....	
2.3.1. Visits at the Male Dormitory at BSU.....	14
2.3.2. Self-censorship.....	15
2.4. Observation of Training Sessions.....	
2.5. Role as a Researcher vs My Status as a “Brother”.....	
2.5.1. Reliability and Validity.....	16
2.6. Conclusion.....	
3. Disciplinary Technologies of Sport and the Hybrid Athlete.....	19
3.1. The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport.....	
3.2. The Effect and Limitations of Sport Discipline.....	
3.3. Panopticism – Surveillance and Control.....	
3.4. The Technology of the Self – The Self-Governed Elite athlete.....	
3.5. The Hybrid Athlete.....	
3.6. Conclusion.....	
4. “Juguo Tizhi” - Elite Sport with Chinese Characteristics.....	26
4.1. The Beginning of Elite Sport in the PRC.....	
4.2. From Cultural Revolution to Ping Pong Diplomacy.....	
4.3. Olympic Gold Fever – Olympic Strategy.....	
4.4. The Administrative Structure of Chinese Sport.....	
4.5. Financial support.....	
4.6. The Pyramid of Chinese Athletes.....	
4.7. Conclusion.....	
5. Organization of Norwegian Sport – Mass and Elite Sport.....	38
5.1. Project 88 – The Centralization of Elite Sport in Norway.....	
5.2. Olympiatoppen – Center of Elite Sport Knowledge.....	
5.3. The Centralization of Elite Sport – Vague Division of Labour between SFs and Olympiatoppen.....	

5.3.1. Funding of elite sport in Norway.....	42
5.4. The 24-hour Athlete.....	
5.5. The Club and the Parents – The Ground Pillar of the Norwegian Sports System.....	
5.6. Regulations of Early Child Specialization.....	
5.7. Conclusion.....	
6. Analysis.....	47
6.1. Selection of Athletes.....	
6.2. The Docility Process – Adjustment and Challenges.....	
6.3. The Weekly Timetable – a Panoptic Tool of Surveillance and Control.....	
6.3.1. Timetable of the Norwegian athletes.....	54
6.4. Written and unwritten team rules at BSU.....	
6.4.1. Unwritten team rules – The four big mistakes.....	57
6.4.2. Dating and having fun in secret.....	59
6.4.3. Forbidden Love – A story of a Nie Yong and Hui Fang.....	61
6.5. Correcting “abnormal” behavior through punishment and written criticism.....	
6.6. Nutrition section at OLT – A Panoptic System of Surveillance and Control.....	
6.7. Pyramid of the Chinese and Norwegian Taekwondo Athletes – Competitive Incentives.....	
6.7.1. The dropout – a story of Zhao Feng.....	68
6.7.2. The pyramid of Norwegian Athletes.....	70
6.8. Observation of Training Session at BSU.....	
6.9. Conclusion.....	
7. Conclusion.....	76
References.....	78
Appendix A: Interview guides.....	80
Interview guide: Chinese athletes.....	
Interview guide: Norwegian athletes.....	
Interview guide: Norwegian coach.....	
Appendix B: Written team rules.....	87
Appendix C: Overview of Empirical data.....	91
Overview of Chinese Informants.....	
Overview of Norwegian Informants.....	91

1. Introduction

1.1 Thesis Statement

My first encounter with China was taekwondo. As a part of the Norwegian national team, we went to a one-month training camp at the Beijing Sports University (BSU) in the Summer of 2005. One year later, I went back and stayed for eight months, living and training as a Chinese athlete. The first thing that struck me was the lack of passion and love for taekwondo. From the perspective of the Chinese athletes, taekwondo is a job. From my perspective, taekwondo was anchored in passion and love. One of my best friend said to me in poor English: “we must train hard every day, every day eat bitter” (吃苦). This memory sparked my interest for writing this thesis.

This work aims to explore the gap between the *homogeneous athletic identity* and *hybrid athlete* among elite taekwondo athletes in China and Norway. With this in mind, the research question to be addressed are?

How do the Chinese and Norwegian elite sports systems impose social control over elite taekwondo athletes, and how the athletes cope with living in these systems?

To investigate these issues, I conducted qualitative fieldwork in both countries. In China, I interviewed 25 former and active taekwondo athletes at Beijing Sports University (BSU), as well as one of the head coaches. In Norway, I interviewed four taekwondo athletes, the assistant, and the head coach of the Norwegian National Team. In China, I observed training sessions at the BSU and gathered the written team rules (队伍管理). I also investigated the components of rules and regulations, physical punishment and self-criticism, and how the athletes coped living under this rigid system.

1.2 Research Status

Susan Brownell (1995) is one of the few western scholars who have conducted ethnographic studies in the field of sport in China. As a former national ranked runner, she represented Peking University's running team at the 1987 national games. Her research is based upon three assumptions. The first assumption is that sports should be analysed as a set of practices which people do with their bodies. Sports should be analysed as part of the entire culture of sport.¹ Her second assumption is about the to relationship between power and the body. Brownell argues that culture of the body is shaped by power relations, including the nation state and society, class, gender and ethnic relations, as well as international relations between

¹ Brownell, *Training the Body for China*, 8.

countries. Attention should be paid to the ways in which power affects the culture of the body.²The last assumption is based on the relationship between professional sport and sport events in the public sphere.³ She examines how athletes are studied and categorized. Lastly, how athletes are disciplined through the use of confessional, written self-evaluations.⁴

Fan Hong (2004) has studied the darker sides of elite sport in China. Her article analyses the elite sport system and examines the problematic relationship between human rights and child athletes in contemporary Chinese society. Hong also discuss issues concerning physical and sexual abuse, lack of human rights for child athletes, and issues with doping.⁵

Ling and Hong (2014) examines the relationship between retired elite athletes, the elite sport system and issues and difficulties athletes meet regarding re-employment.⁶

1.2.1 The Sociology of Sport and Foucault

Pirkko Markula and Richard Pringle (2006) states, that *panopticism* is one of the most discussed theoretical concepts within the sociological study of sport.⁷ One example is Margaret Duncan's (1994) textual analysis of fitness magazines explores a feminist example of the workings of *panopticism* is one example,⁸ and Cole⁹(1993), and Markula (1995)¹⁰has more examples.

In the recent years sports-scholars have examined Foucault's conception of the technologies of the self in relation to sport. Johns and Johns (2000) study focus on the dietary intake of athletes, to show the aspect of the discourse practice which they argue was formed and shaped by the “technology of power as a means of domination and the technology of the self as a means of transformation.”¹¹ For more examples see Jones, Glintmeyer and McKenzie¹² (2005) and Chapman¹³ (1997).

2 Ibid.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., 155.

5 Fan, Hong, “Innocence Lost.”

6 Ling and Hong, “After the Glory.”

7 Markula and Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, 42–43.

8 Duncan, “The Politics of Women’s Body Images and Practices.”

9 Cole, “Resisting the Canon.”

10 Markula, “Firm but Shapely, Fit but Sexy, Strong but Thin.”

11 Johns and Johns, “SURVEILLANCE, SUBJECTIVISM AND TECHNOLOGIES OF POWER An Analysis of the Discursive Practice of High-Performance Sport.”

12 Jones, Glintmeyer, and McKenzie, “Slim Bodies, Eating Disorders and the Coach-Athlete Relationship A Tale of Identity Creation and Disruption.”

13 Chapman, “Making Weight.”

1.2.2 The Elite Athlete

Since this is a thesis about Chinese and Norwegian elite taekwondo athlete, it is important to have a definition of this term. Bosscher (2008) defines the elite athlete as:

“An athlete who, as an individual or as a part of a team, has participated in an elite sports discipline in a European, World Championship, Olympic Games or other competitions that are comparable to these championships or games in the last twelve months”¹⁴

This definition fits well with the Norwegian athletes, who all participate in major tournaments. But it is more problematic when including the Chinese athletes. The scope of athletes are much larger and includes younger athletes who has the potential of becoming a national team member in the future. To fit all the athletes in this thesis study – I suggest to add the potential to become an elite athlete to Bosscher definition. Being an elite athlete also includes about 20-25 hours of training every week.

1.3 Outline of Chapters

Chapter 2 describes the mix of qualitative methods which have been used. The thesis includes a qualitative analysis of interviews, an analysis of written rules and regulations and observations of training sessions and living conditions.

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical concepts applied in this thesis. I begin with introducing the *The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport* and discuss its effect and limitations. Then move on to present *panopticism* as a concept of surveillance and control and introduce Foucault's concept of *The Technology of the Self*. Finally, the concept of the *hybrid athlete* is presented.

Chapter 4 and 5 gives a historical background of policies and organization of elite sport in Norway and China. I will point out some of the characteristic of each system. My fieldwork studies the life of athletes and coaches, who live in and under the system of *juguao tizhi*, and as well as the Norwegian elite sport system of taekwondo.

Chapter 6 presents the analysis of the selection of athletes, the so-called docility process, the weekly timetable, written and unwritten team rules, correcting of abnormal behavior through punishment and written self-criticism, nutrition as a panoptic system of surveillance and control, the pyramid of Chinese and Norwegian taekwondo athletes and finally the analysis observation of training sessions at BSU.

Chapter 7, I discuss the findings are discussed, and point to the main differences between the Chinese and Norwegian elite sport systems. Finally, examine in which ways my study may

14 Bosscher, Bingham, and Shibli, *The Global Sporting Arms Race*, 26.

contribute to a new understanding of the complexities between *The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport* and the *hybrid athlete*.

2. Research Methodology

This chapter discusses the research methodology applied for this thesis. I start by giving a brief background of my past as a former elite athlete and as a coach. Next, I discuss why I chose to do a case study. Then moving on to explain how I conducted the fieldwork. Last, I consider the quality of research, ethical concerns as well as discussing the strengths and limitations of my fieldwork.

2.1. My Background as a Former Elite Raekwondo Athlete and Coach

As a former team member of the Norwegian Taekwondo National Team for eight years, I have experienced the life as an elite athlete with both success and disappointments. After I retired, I have also experienced the role as a coach both at club level as well as a junior national team coach.

2.2. Qualitative Research: A case study of Chinese and Norwegian Elite Taekwondo Athletes

What is qualitative research? John Creswell defines it in this way:

“We conduct qualitative research because we need a complex, detailed understanding of the issue. This detail can only be established by talking directly with people, going to their homes or places of work, and allowing them to tell the stories unencumbered by what we expect to find or what we have read in the literature.”¹⁵

A mix of qualitative research methods enables me to study the elite athletes life experiences in deeper detail. This thesis include qualitative analyses of interviews, written rules and regulations and, of observations of training sessions and living conditions. The variety of these defined methods used ensures greater depth and reliability to answer the research question. Accordingly to Steinar Kvale, the objective of qualitative research is to try to understand the world from the interviewees' point of view and to discover their point of view.¹⁶

In-depth interviews are my primary research method. Having this in mind, one of the main challenges of doing a qualitative case study is the problem of representativeness. How do you know that your case study is representative for what you are studying? As David Silverman points out: “the problem of representativeness is a perennial worry of many qualitative or case study researchers.”¹⁷ Still, notwithstanding its limitations a case study approach allows me to gather data from different sources. Qualitative research cases conducted in China also requires language skill as well as cultural awareness. Elin Sæther argues that: “The China field is

¹⁵ Creswell, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*, 40.

¹⁶ Kvale, *Det Kvalitative Forskningsintervju*, 17.

¹⁷ Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, 140.

characterized by a strong focus on the necessities of proficient language skills and contextual knowledge in order to do qualified academic work.”¹⁸ All of the Chinese athletes I interviewed spoke standard mandarin (普通话). During interviews, if I did not completely understand the context or the meaning, I would ask my interviews to explain it again (再解释一下), using simple (简单) vocabulary.

2.3. Interviews

This thesis is a comparative study of elite taekwondo athletes in China and Norway and is primarily based on interviews with 25 former and active Chinese elite athletes and one coach at the Beijing Sports University (BSU). The interviews in China was carried out in between July-August and October 2014. In addition, I interviewed four Norwegian elite athletes as well the assistant and national team coach in March and April 2015.

My starting point of underling the current work has been to reflect on my former life as an elite athlete. As John Gerring nicely puts it: “we may begin with a hunch, a question, a clear formed of theory or an area of interest.”¹⁹ My initial scope was to know more about of top athletes in China and Norway. As I experienced, the perspective on elite sport in Norway and China are quite different. From the viewpoint of the Chinese athlete, taekwondo is a profession.

For the Norwegian athletes, even if they considered taekwondo as their current full-time occupation. It was rooted in deep passion and love for the sport, when being asked the question: “Why do you train full-time?” all of my interviewees answered, “We are living our dream.”

The goal of the fieldwork at the BSU was to gain more knowledge about the selection of athletes, the weekly timetable, rules and regulations. Additionally I looked as schemes of physical punishment, self-criticism, and how the athletes cope with living under such a rigid system. I addition, I tried to arrange a personal interview with one of the taekwondo coaches, but she was too busy, so instead she replied the interview questions by mail.

Before traveling to China. I contacted my friends at the BSU and told them about my project. Within a couple of days, one of them invited me to his wedding in Inner Mongolia. This was an excellent opportunity to get started. I would meet up with a lot of old friends, in particular former taekwondo athletes at the BSU. Furthermore, I could use my friends at *gate keepers* to

¹⁸ Sæther, “Fieldwork as Coping and Learning,” 45.

¹⁹ Gerring, *Social Science Methodology*, 23.

get in contact with more people. A *gate keeper* is defined as “someone is able to grant or refuse access to the *field*.”²⁰

One of the limitations for conducting field work when going to a Chinese wedding is obligatory drinking, eating, and a tight schedule. In retrospect, I should have just “jumped” into it right away. Quoting Elin Sæther, “At this time of the Summer my contacts were on holiday, on maternity leave, or about to go abroad. In short, they were not sitting waiting for me.”²¹ This was true for me as well, as a few potential interviewees did not return to Beijing that summer. But at least I managed to make some arrangements for later.

During my first field trip I started to interview my old friends – who are retired athletes. In the beginning, I asked advice to improve my interview design (see Appendix A). The interview process was a continuously developing process. I would arrange a meeting via we chat (微信)²² the day before, and I would usually invite my interviewee to the apartment I stayed at in Wudaokou.(五道口) It was convenient for both parties as it only was one stop from Shangdi (上帝) and BSU. Some of my informants would also ask me about my topic and research beforehand. Before every interview, I asked permission to record the conversation, as well as promising anonymity to protect my informants' identity.²³ My goal was to reveal as much as possible, and I often said before we started the interview, “don’t be too formal, I want to listen to your story” (别太正式, 我想听你的故事). Unfortunately, many of the people I knew were away because of the summer vacation, so it became necessary to arrange with another trip to Beijing. And again, my *gateway keeper* was yet another wedding.

2.3.1. Visits at the Male Dormitory at BSU

During my second field trip in China, I also got access to the male dormitory at the BSU. Because of the curfew (team rules), all of the interviews with the active athletes were conducted at the dormitory. I would wait outside the gate of the dormitory for one of the older team members to meet me. Sometimes I could also just walk straight in, but the security guard would sometimes not let me enter before a team member picked me up. I would usually spend a couple of hours conducting interviews, but also just talking informally to the young athletes about their hobbies and life in general. The first time I went to the dormitory, I used one of my former team mates who is still at BSU as a *gateway keeper*. He set me up with a couple of young athletes. Next time, not wanting to bother my friend, I used my new friends to introduce me to more people.

²⁰ Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, 434.

²¹ Sæther, “Fieldwork as Coping and Learning,” 47.

²² Ibid., 45.

²³ Each informant is given a pseudonym

I noticed that in every room there were posted 4-5 sheets of papers explaining the team rules (队伍管理) concerning health and hygiene at the dormitory and training facility training, financial rules, etc. This was very interesting to me. I asked one of the older athletes if I could take pictures, and granted his permission. I also got the notion of the group of males living together functioned as of a second family as older athletes took care (照顾) of the younger ones.

2.3.2. Self-censorship

My Chinese friends treat me as their “brother” (兄弟). I was included in their group, and most of my interviewees spoke openly about sensitive topics such as physical punishment. One of my informants' stated clearly that it was important to tell “our story.” Two out of 26 interviewees subjected themselves to self-censorship when discussing sensitive topics such as physical punishment (挨罚). When being asked about this they replied; this is too sensitive, I will rather not speak about it. (这个东西太敏感了, 不要说了) The coach, unfortunately, who did not have time for a personal interview also put considerable self-restraint on herself in her reply. She simply did not answer to any sensitive questions.

The fieldwork in Norway was conducted in Norway from February – April 2015. I interviewed four out of 8 elite athletes at the national team, as well as both the assistant and national team coach. My focus was to investigate the structures surrounding the athlete; i.e. how Olympiatoppen (OLT) and the coach utilize technologies of surveillance to monitor the athletes' health and weight. The interviews were conducted either at the training facilities or at the apartment where the athletes live.

2.4. Observation of Training Sessions

During my second field trip I got access to the training facilities at the BSU. According to the rules, I was not permitted to enter the actual training compounds., as no-one outside of the team is allowed to observe training sessions. The first time I went, I experienced a closed door. The guard did not let me in, even though I tried to explain to him that I both knew the coaches and some of the athletes. My way in was to try to arrange an interview with one of the coaches, which I knew from way back. The next time, I walked in with the taekwondo team. My friend explained to the guard that I had an arrangement with the coach. I felt a bit uncomfortable, but none the less I got inside. My former coach at the BSU greeted me and said I could stay, and I gave her a small gift; fish oil. As I have experienced through many trips to China and Korea; gifts are a useful in both maintaining and establishing connections (关

系). To my disappointment, however she didn't have time for an interview. I accepted that I would send her my questions on email which she replied.

I observed five training sessions at the BSU. In qualitative research, observation is seen as not a reliable way to collect data as observation is a subjective activity. Qualitative researchers argue that “If used at all, observation is held to by only appropriate at a preliminary or 'exploratory' stage of research.”²⁴ Taking this into consideration, for the current study it was crucially important in two ways. First, gaining access to the training facility at the BSU enabled me to observe the athlete-coach relationship during training sessions. Second, interviewing athletes at the male dormitory allowed me to observe their living conditions. Besides, it enabled me to photograph written team management rules (队伍管理), which will be analysed in Chapter 6. Overall, the second field trip allowed me to gather data from a far wider specter in terms of athletes' age and experience, and a mix from both active and retired athletes as well some fruitful observations.

My status as a former national taekwondo team member and an ex-BSU taekwondo team member made it easier for me to get access to the training facilities and the male dormitory. I did not state directly that I would observe the training sessions, but I asked permission to watch sessions and to take some photographs.

2.5. Role as a Researcher vs My Status as a “Brother”

One of the challenges in doing qualitative research is related to how your interviewees view you. For me, even whilst being a foreigner, my status as a former Norwegian national team athlete combined with my contacts at BSU made it quite easy to get access. Moreover, my status as a “brother” (兄弟) of the former athletes helped me a lot to gain access and trust. But still, I need to address concern about *methodology awareness*. As Clive Seale argues,

“Methodological awareness involves a commitment to showing as much as possible to the audience of research studies ... the procedures and evidence that have led to a particular conclusions, always open to the possibility that conclusions may need to be revised in the light of new evidence.”²⁵

Two terms are central to avoid methodological pitfalls; Validity and reliability.²⁶

2.5.1. Reliability and Validity

One of the challenges of doing qualitative fieldwork is reliability. Altheide and Johnson argue that *reliability* refers to “the stability of findings, whereas *validity* represents the truthfulness

²⁴ Silverman, *Doing Qualitative Research*, 122.

²⁵ Seale quoted in *ibid.*, 274.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

of findings.”²⁷ Reliability is related to reproducibility meaning whether or not the findings can be reproduced if the research is conducted again.²⁸ This can be a significant in qualitative research. For instance, not all types of observations are possible repeat. Silverman proposes two more criteria for judging reliability – transparency and concrete descriptions. In this chapter, I have presented the researched methodology applied in this thesis, with the aim to make the research as transparent as possible. Throughout my analysis, I will provide numerous of examples of what was said. Again in the words of Clive Seal argues;

“recording observations in terms that are as concrete as possible, including verbatim accounts of what people say, for example rather than researchers' reconstructions of the general sense of what a person said, which would allow researchers' personal perspectives to influence the reporting.”²⁹

I transcribed 20 of 25 interviews conducted in Chinese. The reason for excluding five of them was that other people interfered and made it difficult to transcribe them. The duration of the interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 20 minutes long. I estimate that the total amount of transcribed audio was approximately 20 hours. 24 out of 25 interviews were male, I only manage to interview one female athlete. I have chosen to not use her interview in my thesis, as the my group of athletes are male dominated.

In the process of transcribing, I marked pauses if the informants spent time thinking, but excluded non-verbal expressions such as laughter, facial-expression and non-verbal commutative signals. I transcribed everything they said, excluding irrelevant topics such as the contact information on social media, talk about me attending Chinese weddings and the new development of taekwondo.

During the process of conducting interviews and transcribing them, emerge patterns of key concepts. The 13 most important key concepts that I draw upon in my analysis are: team management rules (队伍管理), self-criticism (件套), physical punishment (挨罚), timetable, “eat bitter” (吃苦), sport ranking (运动成绩), injury (受伤), contradictions (矛盾), retirement (退役), having fun in secret (偷偷的玩儿), dating (谈恋爱), older athletes (老队员) and new athletes (新人). In total I had 34 codes, but this included general information on family background, age, education and so on. I coded the whole Chinese interview material with accordingly. For this purpose, I used the software program HyperRESEARCH.³⁰ This allowed me to get a better overview over my empirical data as well to explore the nuances in empirical data. For

27 Altheide and Johnson quoted in Silverman, *Interpreting Qualitative Data*, 360.

28 Ibid.

29 Clive Seal *ibid.*, 361.

30 For more info about HyperRESEARCH see, <https://www.researchware.com/products/hyperresearch.html>

example, if I selected the code “team management rules”, it allowed me to compare and see all that has been said about this particular key concept.

The interviews conducted in Norway, were not transcribed due to time pressure. However, repeatedly I would go back to listen to the audio to ensure and verify what was being said. After each interview I would take field notes to get full overview.

During my fieldwork, I became aware that some of my interviewees may choose to omit or emphasize certain things: perhaps deliberately or not. By combining a mix of methods interviews and observation, I hope to obtain a deeper understanding of the topic. One of the challenges I have had to address is the lack of secondary literature, but again this allows me to explore and modify theories to my case study.

2.6. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter has explained and discussed the methodology of the current work. To obtain a new perspective of the Chinese and Norwegian elite taekwondo athlete, I have conducted a qualitative case study. It includes interviews, conversations and observations of training sessions and living conditions. I have explained the qualitative methods applied for this thesis, pointing out both its strengths and weaknesses.

3. Disciplinary Technologies of Sport and the Hybrid Athlete

In this chapter, the purpose is to present the *theoretical concepts* applied to this thesis. I will primarily utilize Foucauldian concepts as developed by Deborah Shogan (1999), Pirkko Markula & Richard Pringle (2007), Juha Heikalla (1993) and Geneviève Rail and Jean Harvey (1991). I have made a deliberate choice to not present a broad picture of Foucault's theories, but an eclectic selection of the theoretical concepts relevant for my analysis. First, I will discuss the so-called *disciplinary technologies* of sport that shape and conform a homogeneous *docile athletic identity*. This includes the Foucauldian concept of *docile bodies* and *correct training*. Then, moving on to utilize the *Panopticon* as the concept of surveillance and control. Next, to present a modified concept of the *hybrid athlete*, a concept borrowed from Shogan (1999). Finally, I present the *Technology of the Self* as to explain the self-discipline mechanisms of the Norwegian athlete.

3.1. The Disciplinary Technologies of Sport

Debra Shogan's book *The Making of High-Performance Athletes* (1999) is relevant to my thesis. She borrows and modifies two Foucauldian concepts; *docile bodies* and *correct training* and utilizes them to explain the process of conforming and shaping high-performance athletes. A docile body when according to Foucault: "A body is *docile* that may be, subjected, used, transformed and improved."³¹ In *Discipline and Punish* (1977), Foucault describes how discipline arises from giving each individual a private space; performing each action correctly and in relation to a strict timetable; and setting up a training schedule containing activities of increasing difficulty. Finally, there is an examination whose purpose is to evaluate acquired skills and organize individuals into a collective entity.³² Foucault mapped out the discipline technologies in the workshop, the army, the school and the hospital. Shogan maps out the disciplinary technologies of sport to show how they sport can be used to produce disciplined athletes.³³ Shogan points out two kinds of disciplines associated with the training of elite athletes. She argues:

"I am now able to spell out something I already knew – that those technologies that control or 'discipline' athletes in order to produce athletic skills also constitute the body of knowledge or 'discipline' of high-performance sport. Like other disciplines, 'sport discipline' entails both meanings of discipline – discipline as a body of knowledge and discipline as control, such that the body of knowledge that constitutes the discipline of high-performance sport of the technologies that 'discipline' or control athletic bodies. Disciplinary power is exercised both through the subject matter of discipline conveyed through discourse and at the level of the body controlled through technology."³⁴

31 Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*, 136.

32 Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 19.

33 Ibid.

34 Ibid., 9–10.

This discipline produce expert knowledge about how to produce disciplined elite athletes. However, she limits her perspective on the disciplinary technologies to the training grounds. The disciplinary technologies of sport Shogan utilizes are constraints of action by circumscribing space, time and procedures of movement produce skilled athletes who exercise power when performing these skills.³⁵ Her first concept is the *art of distributions* – technologies of enclosure, partitioning, function, and rank.³⁶ This addresses, how coaches not only have to organize the training, but also manipulates time and space, enable and put constraints on movements to fit rules and limitations created by the particular sport.³⁷ An enclosure is a technique to seal off the training grounds from the people outside, in order to eliminate distractions. In addition, it serves the purpose of reinforcing the boundaries between who is to count as an athlete and who is not.³⁸ *Partitioning*, is when the coach to divides athletes into different groups according to their level of skill, and gives them concrete tasks, according to their *functions* on the court.³⁹ This enables the coach to *rank* athletes, again according to their skill level.⁴⁰ Shogan summarizes the art of distributions in this matter: “The technologies that make up ‘*the art of distribution*’ – enclosure, partitioning, function, and rank – have the effect of demarcating athletes architecturally, functionally and hierarchically.

Shogan's next aspect that is relevant to this thesis is how the coach is the master of the timetables. Shogan describes how one session can be organized into different sections.⁴¹ In Taekwondo, a session could be divided into different sections; warm up, stretching, technical training and sparring. The coach must also have a timetable to establish a training schedule for the season, postseason and preseason, condition training, strategy, teamwork and skill development.⁴² Juha Heikkala (1993) argues that the purpose of coaching is:

“The purpose of coaching is to plan the training and competition cycles so as to bring out the potential inherent in every athlete and to build up bodily performance for the desired result. This peak performance is to be released on a precise occasion, in a particular place and at a particular time.”⁴³

The timetable is also a crucial element when establishing training cycles and/or rhythms of a specific technique and repetition. In a competitive setting, repetition is central to achieve a disciplined performance.⁴⁴

35 Ibid., 19.

36 Ibid., 20.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid., 23.

39 Shogan uses examples from when she was a basketball coach *ibid.*, 20–28.

40 Ibid., 22.

41 Ibid., 23–26.

42 Ibid., 25.

43 Heikkala and others, “Discipline and Excel,” 399.

44 Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 25.

Shogan goes on to describe her second concept *correct training* which involves the tools the coach has to observe, correct and alter athletes. Information about the individual is obtained by using simple instruments, such as *hierarchical observation* and *normalizing judgement*.⁴⁵ These two instruments produce the *examination* of a specific action or technique. Observation of the athlete is more than just to see him/her; proper observation makes it possible to know them and to alter them.⁴⁶ Foucault saw *hierarchical observation* and *normalizing judgment* as a method to gather personal knowledge about the individual.⁴⁷ The final test of the learned skills is the *examination*. Heikkala argues that these three technologies help to transform the athletes to an 'object of knowledge' so they can be controlled and shaped.⁴⁸ Through hierarchical observation the coach can for example, implement additional drills for the untrained athlete, and punishing drills for the tardy.⁴⁹ A *normalizing judgment* is typically followed by a schema of punishments, Foucault described to range from light physical punishment to minor deprivations and petty humiliations, resulting from the slightest departures from the “correct” behaviour.⁵⁰ These forms of punishments are designed to encourage subjects to be normal – meaning to perform an athletic technique correctly. *Normalization* revolves around a double system including gratification and punishment.⁵¹ Yet, Foucault pointed out that punishment are best avoided in favour of rewards.⁵² In Chapter 6, this thesis will utilize some of these concepts in the observation of a training session. For example how athletes at BSU is divided into two teams according to their level of skill i, the experienced team (大队) with skilled athletes and the beginner team (小队) with unskilled athletes.

Shogan's perspective on the production of *docile athletic bodies* is limited to the disciplinary techniques associated with the training grounds. Still, she has some important remarks that include structures outside the training area. Shogan writes:

“The discipline of high-performance sport produces a set of knowledges about “the athlete”, who is then controlled and shaped by these knowledges in a constant pressure to conform to a standard of high-performance sport. Most advanced coaching texts describe details on how movement is produced, without, I dare say, the authors having read Foucault. Yet, sport theorists and practitioners still construe power as a possession of some leveled against others – most often coaches, athletic therapists, and administrators against athletes – rather than as a network of practices, institutions and technologies that produce

45 Ibid., 35.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid., 44.

48 Heikkala quoted in *ibid.*

49 Ibid., 36.

50 Markula and Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, 42.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

the activities in which athletes, coaches, therapists, and administrators engage and that serve to sustain positions of the dominance of experts in sport discipline.⁵³

Shogan sees the production of high-performance athletes as a network of practices that produces expert knowledge about athletes and how to train them. This is to some extent what this thesis is trying to explore, as I will look at the structures and actors (athletes and coaches) that monitors each other both inside and outside the training grounds. The data and the discussion, may contribute to new understanding of the transformation process, which shapes and puts social constraints on the elite athlete. The next question to discuss is the limits of the athletic docile athlete.

3.2. The Effect and Limitations of Sport Discipline

Geneviève Rail and Jean Harvey (1995) argues that *disciplines* consists of modern formulas of domination and integration to the social order that aim “(a) to disperse, mark and fix the population and (b) to train bodies of individuals so that their movements and gestures provide an optimum efficiency.”⁵⁴ Disciplines are concrete and distinct forms of tools for the purpose of the domination of bodies, and these forms of power are new because they use normalization rather than repression to invest in bodies.⁵⁵ These definitions fit very well with the Shogan's concepts described above of how the coach divides (*partitioning*) the athletes according to skill and *rank* them thereafter. But how should one define *discipline* and what are its function and limits? Foucault defines *discipline power* in this matter:

“Defined how one have a hold over others' body, not only so that they may do what one wishes, but so that they may operate as one wishes, with the techniques, the speed, and the efficiency that one determines. This discipline produces subjected and practised bodies, 'docile' bodies.”⁵⁶

The purpose of the disciplinary technologies of sport is to train skilled *docile* athletes, Foucault did not see modern relations of power as oppressive, but rather as productive. As shown in *Discipline and Punish* (1977), the production of learned young people as the “soldier” and “teacher” are *normalized*, but this is not to predict or to determine what they will do, but being qualified as a teacher or a soldier can predict how they will function.⁵⁷ The effect of sport discipline is *normalization*, - Heikalla (1993), argues that *normalization* of a disciplined athlete is a precondition for athletic success. He argues:

“This normalization is a precondition of athletic success. Plans are like yardsticks for athletic conduct. If an athlete falls ill, skips training sessions or overtrain, these may prove to be devastating for optimally calculated enhancement of performance and may require

53 Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 10.

54 Rail and Harvey, “Body at Work,” 165.

55 Ibid.

56 Markula and Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, 39.

57 Marshall, “Governmentality Studies in Education,” 139.

revising plans. The individual athlete is required to act according to the norms of correct training. Every deviation, assertion of personal freedom, and example of neglect is costly in the economics of performance enhancement.”⁵⁸

Following Foucault's and Heikkala's line of thought, the elite taekwondo athlete is constrained by a set of rules that shape and conform a strong athletic identity. Nancy Fraser connects productive power and constraints and argues:

“Foucault claims that the functioning of discursive regimes essentially involves forms of social constraints. Such constraints and the manner of their application vary, of course, along with the regime ... Their obvious heterogeneity notwithstanding, all of these are instances of the ways in which *social constraints*, or in Foucault's terms “*power*,” circulates in and through the production or discourses in societies.”⁵⁹

Shogan builds upon Fraser's argument and points to the how the rules of modern sport enable certain actions and put constraints on other what athletes are allowed to do. The perspective of this thesis is to look at the structures that are built around the athletes; team rules, the weekly timetable and the medical and nutrition team. It tries to explore how the shaping and transformation of the elite athletic identity is a process that occupies time and space and reaches outside of the disciplinary spaces of the training grounds. Fraser understood Foucault's notion of power to be the same as constraints on action.⁶⁰ I will suggest that the conformity and production of *docile normalized* athletes is not only limited to the training ground. For this purpose, I will present my next theoretical concept, *Panopticism* as means of surveillance and control of athletes.

3.3. Panopticism – Surveillance and Control

Foucault summarized the *Panopticon* as “the existence of a whole set of techniques and institutions for measuring, supervising and correcting the abnormal.”⁶¹ The *Panopticon* refers to Jeremy Bentham's design of the perfect system of surveillance and control. The watchman can at all times surveil and control inmates in this system.⁶² The inmates are aware that they are being watched, but they don't have any knowledge about when being seen. (see fig.3.1). The effect of the Panopticon is to induce the inmates to be in a “state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power”⁶³ The omnipresent gaze of authority disciplines the subjects to supervise their own actions – and make them *docile*, the become they own supervisors.⁶⁴

58 Heikkala and others, “Discipline and Excel,” 400.

59 Fraser quoted in Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 4.

60 Fraser, *Unruly Practices*, 20.

61 Foucault quoted in Markula and Pringle, *Foucault, Sport and Exercise*, 42.

62 Ibid., 43.

63 Foucault quoted in *ibid.*

64 Ibid.

On a broader scale Panopticism refers to a “political anatomy” where the mechanisms of surveillance and discipline are no longer locked within a building or a certain institution but function, according to Foucault, “in a diffused, multiple, polyvalent way throughout the body.”⁶⁵ Foucault traced this from of modern surveillance back through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the growth of disciplinary institutions such as hospitals, jails, factories, schools, and gymnasiums.⁶⁶ Panopticism in modern society refers to the new forms of surveillance, such as surveillance-cameras. The gradual state-control of disciplinary technologies, for example a state-controlled police force. On a societal level it would describe people living in a modern society of surveillance – a new form of disciplinary society.⁶⁷

The purpose of this thesis is to use *panopticism* to describe the surveillance and power function of the institutions and structures surrounding the Chinese and Norwegian athletes.

3.4. The Technology of the Self – The Self-Governed Elite athlete

The technologies of elite sport discipline does not only include production of athletic skill, but also extend to controlling the athlete's life, placing restrictions on what he/she should eat and not eat, when to sleep, and other activities in which they are engaged and committed following. Notwithstanding this, I have found that many elite athletes willingly and knowingly commit themselves to this themselves to this regime. As Heikkala argues, sport is not forced labour, it also includes a strong voluntary flavor.⁶⁸ In Norway, the restrictions are not is not forced upon the athlete, but rather as Foucault nicely put it:

“Technologies of the self, which permit the individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own body and souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection or immorality.”⁶⁹

The *Technology of the self* fits with the Norwegian elite taekwondo athlete. Their basis for committing to a life as a top athlete is a firm a dedication to the sport. Augestad and Bergsgaard ascribe the Norwegian elite athlete dedication to the their sport to *asceticism* – and draws a parallel to the life of a monk.⁷⁰ The monk's life is guided by a set of rules, which enable him to be in control of his bodily needs.⁷¹ The Norwegian elite taekwondo athletes motivation is bound in self-discipline to pursue a goal, for example, a dream of winning an Olympic gold medal.

65 Foucault quoted in *ibid* *ibid*.

66 *Ibid*.

67 *Ibid*.

68 Heikkala quoted in Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 13.

69 Foucault et al., *Technologies of the Self*, 18.

70 Augestad and Bergsgard, *Toppidrettens Formel*, 228.

71 *Ibid*.

3.5. The Hybrid Athlete

The *hybrid athlete* is a concept developed by Shogan. Shogan argues that there is a gap in the athletic identity, she traces this type of resistance or diversity in the postmodern context of sport to gender, sexuality, race and ability.⁷² Shogan suggests that since athletes, like other people, participate in overlapping activities, they have a distinctive hybrid identity. In other words, there will always be a gap between the athletic identity and the personal identity of the individual athlete.⁷³ The gaps can be exploited when it's necessary to refuse and to follow, the homogenizing impulse of modern sport.⁷⁴

The concept of *hybrid athlete* gives this thesis a room to explore the subtle ways in which especially the older athletes (老队员) in the Chinese system use to challenge and in extreme cases openly oppose the rigid system of social constraints.

3.6. Conclusion

To conclude this chapter has presented the *theoretical concepts* applied to my thesis. The disciplinary technologies of sport discipline include Shogan's modified concepts of *docile bodies* and *correct training*. However, whereas she examines the *disciplinary technologies* limited to the training grounds, this thesis will explore the possibilities and argue that the transformation of the elite athlete identity is a process which occupies time, space and actors that reaches outside the disciplinary technologies of the training grounds.

⁷² Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 45.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

4. “Juguo Tizhi” - Elite Sport with Chinese Characteristics

This chapter aims to give a historical background of the policies and organization of Chinese elite sport. In China, the elite sport system is called *juguo tizhi* (举国体制), which translates into English as “whole country support for the elite sport system.”⁷⁵ This chapter will first provide a historical background of the development of Chinese elite sport, after which the organization and funding of *juguo tizhi* will be discussed. Finally, the chapter will describe the pyramid of athletes – a hierarchy of athletes where sport ranking (运动成绩) is central to climbing the pyramid.

4.1. The Beginning of Elite Sport in the PRC

According to Dennis Whitby (1999), sport in pre-1949 China was a part of the wealthy elite, and the poor health of the Chinese population was one of many reasons why China was being described as the sick man of Asia.⁷⁶ After the establishment of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in October 1949 sport became a tool to promote Chinese communist identity in international politics. China's participation in the Helsinki Olympic Games in 1952 was symbolically significant, in using sports to promote communism and strengthen China's position in international politics.⁷⁷ China's participation in Helsinki became somewhat amputated, however, as the football and basketball teams arrived too late, and only one swimmer actually competed in the games.⁷⁸

Besides from elite sport, the Chinese government also promoted mass sport to the general population. The overall goal was to improve the general health of the Chinese population. The Party Central Committee issued a directive that laid out the foundations of mass sport, entitled “strengthening work in physical culture and sport for the people.”⁷⁹ In Mao’s own words, “promote physical culture; build up the people's health”.⁸⁰

The State Physical Education and Sport Commission (国家体育运动委员会, from now on referred to as the Sport Commission) was formally established in 1952, under the direction of the leadership of the State Council.⁸¹ In 1956, the Sport Commission issued the “The Competitive Sport System of the PRC”, which formally laid the foundations for competitive sport in China.⁸² Forty-three sports were officially recognized, and rules and regulations were

75 Hong, “China,” 42.

76 Whitby, “Elite Sport,” 120.

77 Hong, “China,” 28.

78 Whitby, “Elite Sport,” 120.

79 Ibid., 121.

80 Mao quoted in *ibid.*, 120.

81 Hong, “China,” 28.

82 Ibid.

established for each of them.⁸³ Professional teams were established at provincial and national level. National and regional championship were arranged once a year. National Games took place every four years “to promote elite sport and to unite the nation through this event.”⁸⁴ The national games (全国运动会) is still today regarded as one of the most important competitions in China for elite athletes.

A directive entitled “The Regulations of the Youth Spare-Time Sports Schools” was also issued in 1956.⁸⁵ Spare-time sports schools (体校) were set up all over China, an adoption from The Soviet Elite sports system. By September 1958, 16,000 spare-time sports schools had been established in China, with around 700,000 students in total.⁸⁶ With the Great Leap Forward (GLF) campaign, China aimed at catching up with Great Britain and the United States in economic and social development. In 1957, The Sports Ministry issued the Sports GLF campaign, whose goal was to close the gap to the West in the world's most competitive sports countries within 10 years. The goal was to foster 15,0000 thousand full-time professional athletes. Basketball, table-tennis, football, volleyball, athletics, gymnastics, weightlifting, shooting, swimming, and skating were selected as core sports.⁸⁷ In 1959, Rong Guotan became the first Chinese to win a world championship in any sport, when he won the gold in table-tennis⁸⁸.

The failure of the GLF was followed by the Great Famine (1962-1963), during which there was a drastic shortage of food and resources.⁸⁹ As a consequence, the government had to reduce the number of sports teams, athletes, and sports schools. In 1961, the Sports Ministry issued a directive called “Regulations for Outstanding Athletes and Teams” to improve the system, but the consequences were that the number of core sports were slimmed down from 43 to the following 10: Athletics, badminton, gymnastics, football, swimming, basketball, shooting, weightlifting, table tennis and skiing. The Communist Party concentrated resources around a few athletes in these ten selected sports.⁹⁰

4.2. From Cultural Revolution to Ping Pong Diplomacy

The Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) brought a decade of chaos and destruction to the Chinese society. In May 1966, this violent political storm targeted the Sports Ministry in Beijing. Questions and criticism were directed at the relation between elite and mass sport.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Wu quoted in *ibid.*

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Whitby, “Elite Sport,” 120.

⁸⁹ Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2398.

⁹⁰ Hong, “China,” 29.

“Was sport for the few elite athletes or the masses?”⁹¹ “Was sports for medals or the health and defense of the country?”⁹² The first was regarded as bourgeois ideology and the latter regarded as communist idealism.⁹³ The Cultural Revolution led to a breakdown of the training system.⁹⁴ Sports schools were closed down, and the Chinese national teams stopped competing abroad. Outstanding athletes were criticized and beaten and labeled as “promising sons and daughters of the bourgeois.”⁹⁵ Once again, however, the situation changed with the re-establishment of China-US relations in beginning of the 1970s.⁹⁶

Elite sport played a significant role in the normalization process between China and the West. At the 31st World Table-Tennis Championship in Japan in February 1971, China used its *Ping-Pong diplomacy* to open up the political door to the United States and the West.⁹⁷ One year later, on the 21st of February 1972, President Nixon and Chairman Mao met in Beijing, and a week later a joint communique was issued in Shanghai. “Ping-Pong diplomacy” has not only helped bringing China out of isolation, but also changed the direction of elite sport.⁹⁸ Elite sport was a useful tool for breaking down barriers and promote international contacts between different political systems.⁹⁹ In 1972, while the whole country was still in chaos and turmoil the first ministry to be restored was the Sports Ministry.¹⁰⁰ In March, 1972 the Sports Ministry held a sport conference to restore the training system of the sports schools.¹⁰¹ By the end of 1974, 1,459 sports schools had been reopened, and provincial and national sport teams had been re-established.¹⁰² Team China, once again reappeared on the international sporting stage. The state also promoted sport for the masses, and millions of Chinese were introduced to modern sports, both through the media and on the grassroots level.¹⁰³

Elite sport played a significant role in the later years of the Cultural Revolution. It enabled China to approach its Western rivals in a non-political way, with the slogan going; “friendship first, competition second.”¹⁰⁴ Elite sport was also a useful tool to strengthen relations between

91 Ibid., 30.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2387.

95 Ibid.

96 Ibid.

97 Hong, “China,” 31.

98 Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2387.

99 Ibid.

100 Hong, “China,” 32.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2387.

104 Ibid.

allies, helping China to transform its image and to establish its position as the leader of the Third World.¹⁰⁵

The development of sports during the cultural revolution left two legacies. First, sport turned out to be valuable as a tool of diplomacy. Second, it introduced millions of peasants to modern sport, most who had never participated or watched modern sport. Fan Wei, Fan Hong and Zhouxiang argues that the cultural revolution enabled sports to establish itself in the Chinese society.¹⁰⁶

From a historical viewpoint, it is interesting to notice how sports played a decisive political role and even advanced during the Cultural Revolution which brought chaos and destruction to many other institutions in the Chinese society. To conclude, elite sport in the Maoist era (1949-1978) was right at the center of politics.¹⁰⁷ Success on the international sporting stage was considered to demonstrate the superiority of socialism over capitalism.¹⁰⁸

4.3. Olympic Gold Fever – Olympic Strategy

With Deng Xiaoping's Opening and Reform Policies (改革开放), meaning economic reform, China sought to integrate itself into the world economy. The goal was to catch up with the West through modernization.¹⁰⁹ In 1979, China, after thirty years of isolation joined the International Olympic Committee (IOC). Attending the Olympics became symbolically important – through elite sports China could catch up with and sometimes even beat the Western powers. The success of the Chinese Woman Volleyball team at the 1979 World Volleyball Championships was seen as a huge victory for China as a nation.¹¹⁰ Success in sports, especially in the Olympics was not only evidence of ideological superiority and economic development, but also a statement of the national revival of China.¹¹¹

At the National Sports Conference in 1980, Sports Minister Wang Meng pointed out the importance of forging a relationship between elite sport and economic development.¹¹² Wang stated that the socialist economy was crucial to the development of Chinese elite sport. On the one hand, China was still a poor country with limited resources to invest in sport. On the other, elite sport was a useful tool in promoting China's new image to the world.¹¹³ The

¹⁰⁵ Hong, "China," 32.

¹⁰⁶ Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, "Chinese State Sports Policy," 2387.

¹⁰⁷ Hong, Wu, and Xiong, "Beijing Ambitions," 518.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Tan and Green, "Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008," 314–315.

¹¹⁰ Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, "Chinese State Sports Policy," 2388.

¹¹¹ Hong, Wu, and Xiong, "Beijing Ambitions," 519.

¹¹² "Sport and Politics in the 1980s," 74.

¹¹³ Ibid.

international success of the Chinese athletes would give pride and hope to the nation, both of which were needed in the new era of economic and social transformation.¹¹⁴

The close relationship between the state and the development of Chinese elite sport was further developed after China's participation in the 1984 Olympic Games. In 1985, The Society of Strategic Research for the Development of Physical Education and Sport (体育发展战略研究会) presented the framework 'Olympic Strategy' (奥运战略) to the Sports Ministry.¹¹⁵ China would allocate resources to develop elite sport with the goal to “ensure that China would become a leading sports power by the end of the twentieth century.”¹¹⁶

In 1993, Sport Minister Wu Shaozhou, proposed a framework to integrate sport into an increasingly market-oriented economy. It had three central components: the Olympic Strategy, the Development of Sports Industry and Commerce Strategy, and the National Fitness for All Program.¹¹⁷ The new policy should incorporate commercial interest and integrate sport into the people's daily life – the privatization of mass sport, suggesting that people should pay to participate in sports.¹¹⁸ Sports were expected to be economically self-sufficient and not rely on governmental funding.¹¹⁹ The Olympic Strategy was still the priority; the main goal was to excel at the Olympic Games. Wu Shaozhou emphasized the focus on success in the Olympics: “The highest aim of Chinese sport is success in the Olympic Games. We must concentrate our resources on it. To raise the flag at the Olympics is our main responsibility.”¹²⁰

China did succeed. After 32 years of absence from the Olympics, China won 15 gold medals and was placed fourth in the medals table in the Los Angeles Olympic Games in 1984.¹²¹ At the 27th Olympic Games in Sydney in 2000, Team China achieved a historic breakthrough by winning 28 gold medal and finishing third in the medals table.¹²² The term *juguo tizhi* began to appear in official statements after this success in Sydney. The Secretary-General of the Party, Jiang Zemin, explained China's success by comparing China with the sporting superpowers the United States and Russia;

“The success of American sport depends on its economic power; the success of Russian sport depends on its rich resources and experience in training elite athletes; the success of Chinese

114 Ibid., 74–75.

115 Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2388.

116 Ibid.

117 Ibid., 2389.

118 Ibid., 2388.

119 Ibid., 2389.

120 Ibid., 2388.

121 Hong, Wu, and Xiong, “Beijing Ambitions,” 512.

122 Hong, “China,” 34.

sport depends on Juguo Tizhi” - “the whole country’s support for the elite sport system.”¹²³

The juguo tizhi gave China enormous victories on the international sport arena, and it all culminated in the Beijing Games in 2008, where China finished on the top of the medals table with a record-breaking 51 gold medals. Juguo tizhi had fulfilled its purpose of transforming China into a world power of sports.¹²⁴

The future of *juguo tizhi* was under discussion before the Beijing Games, and some scholars predicted that these games would be the last celebration of *juguo tizhi*.¹²⁵ Notwithstanding this, according to Fan Hong and L. Zhouxiang (2010) the Chinese triumph at the Beijing Olympic Games proved the role of elite sport in establishing China’s international image. Moreover, fulfilling China’s ambitions to be one of the global economic and political superpowers of the twenty-first century.¹²⁶ In addition, Hong and Zhouxiang argues that elite sport is connected to China's new nationalism,- the restoration of the great Chinese civilization and supports the consolidation and continuation of *juguo tizhi*. The last 30 years of sporting success on the international sporting stage, Chinese people have witness the glory of the China; to be proud of being Chinese and a sense of unity as a great nation.¹²⁷ Hong and Zhouxiang suggests that sports policy will be centred around three pillars; mass sport, the sports industry and the continuation of *juguo tizhi* in post-Beijing olympic era.¹²⁸

4.4. The Administrative Structure of Chinese Sport

One of the main characteristics of the *juguo tizhi* is its tight connection with the Chinese state. In many ways, the juguo tizhi reflects the Party’s political ideology, being organized with a centralized administrative and management system.

123 Ibid., 35–36.

124 Wei, Hong, and Zhouxiang, “Chinese State Sports Policy,” 2390.

125 Ibid., 2394.

126 Ibid.

127 Ibid.

128 Ibid., 2399.

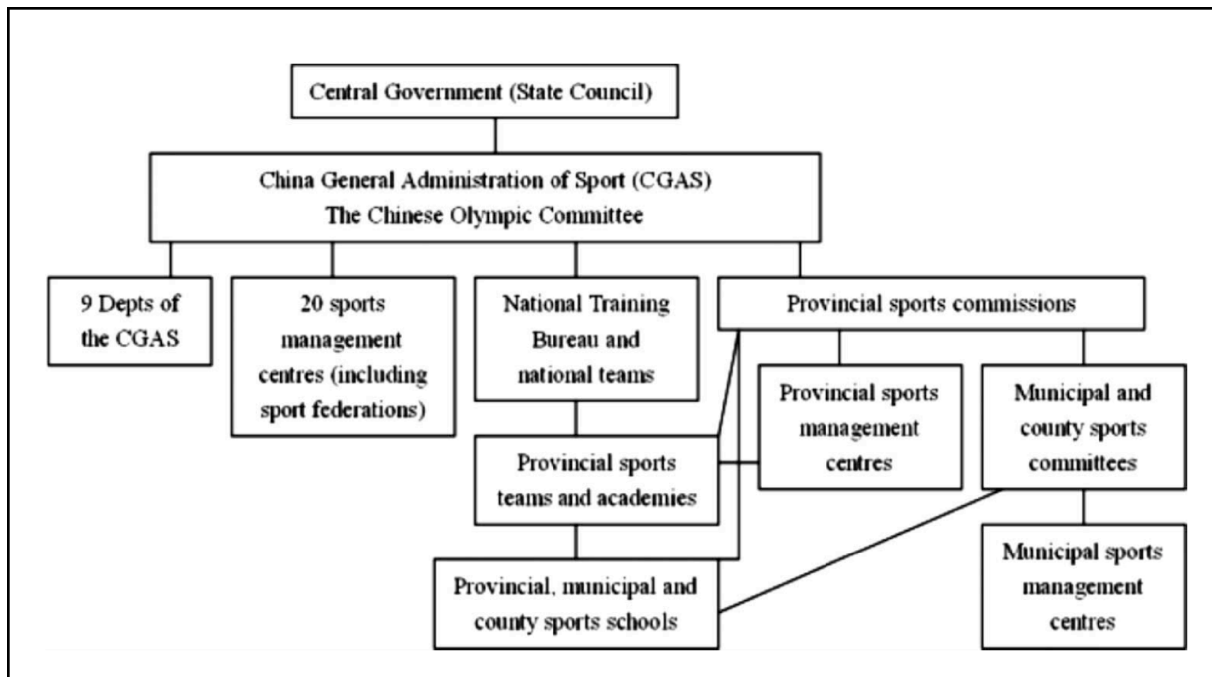


Illustration 4.1: The administrative structure of Chinese sport (1998-2009). Figure developed by Fan Hong. Hong Fan, L Zhouxiang, "From Barcelona to Athens (1992-2004)", 116

On the top of the hierarchy with the overall responsibility is the Central Government (see figure 4.1). Under the Central Government, sits the China General Administration of Sport and the Chinese Olympic Committee (CGAS). Below CGAS, there are four different branches; nine departments of CGAS, 20 sports management centres, National Training Bureau and national teams and the Provincial sports commissions. The 4th level consists of three branches; Provincial sports teams and academies, Provincial sports management centres and City and County sports committees. On the bottom, there are two branches; Provincial, city and county sports schools and City sports management centres.¹²⁹

During the 1990s, the central government pushed ahead to reform the organization of Chinese sport.¹³⁰ In 1998, the Sports Ministry changed its name from the State Physical Education and Sports Commission (国家体育运动委员会) to the General Administration of Sport of China (国家体育总局).¹³¹ The China General Administration of Sport (CGAS) was reduced from more than twenty departments to only nine. The main task for the nine different departments under CGAS, was the formulation, supervision and implementation of new policies.¹³² The original sports departments were transformed into twenty management centres. The management centres were given the administrative responsibility to manage training and commercial interests. The overall goal with the new management structure was to make the sports

¹²⁹ Hong Fan, L. Zhouxiang, "From Barcelona to Athens (1992-2004)," 116.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 115.

¹³¹ Ibid., 116.

¹³² Ibid.

federations more efficient and economically self-sufficient; i.e., to rely less on governmental funding.¹³³ For example, the Chinese Table Tennis Federation and Badminton Federation became unified and located at the National Table Tennis and Badminton Centre.¹³⁴

4.5. Financial support

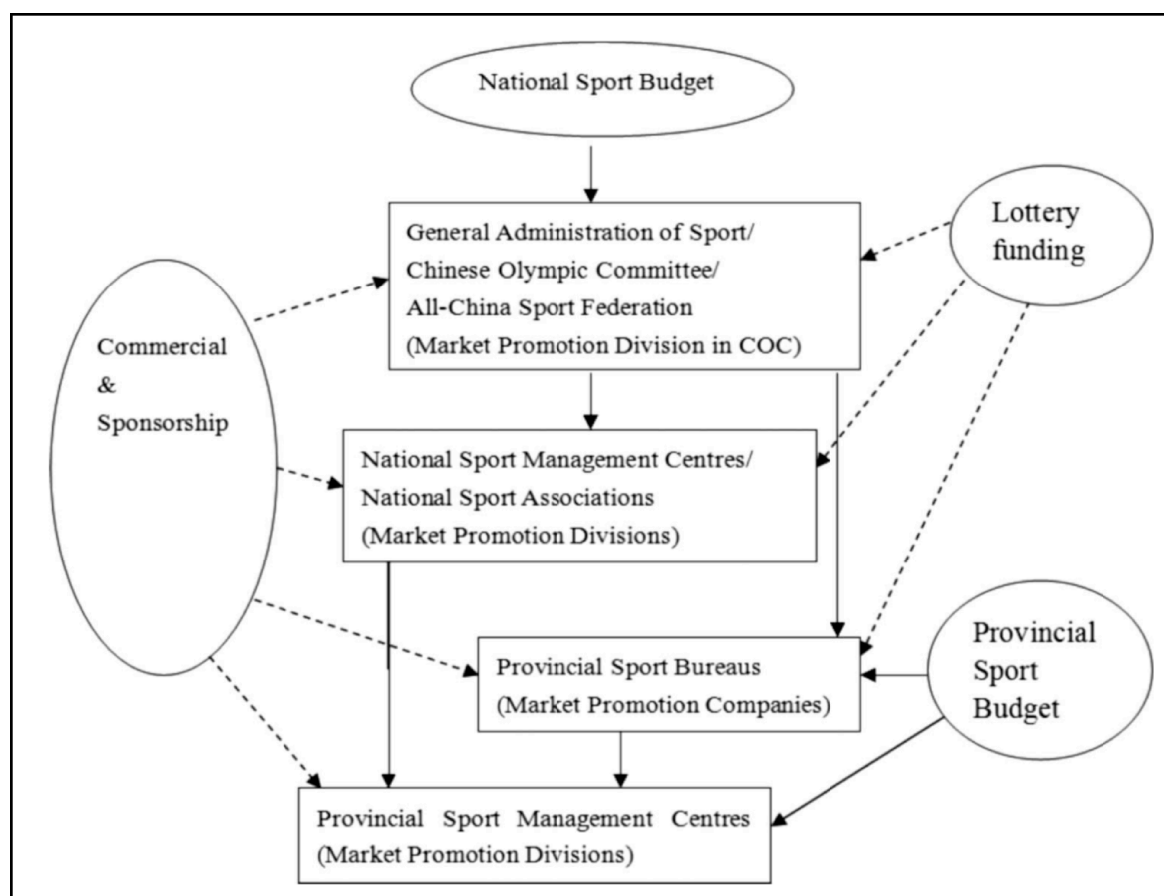


Illustration 4.2: The administrative structure of Chinese sport (1998-2009). Figure developed by Fan Hong. Hong Fan, L Zhouxiang, "From Barcelona to Athens (1992-2004)", 117

Before the 1990s, government funding was the only source of income to the *juguó tǐzhì*. However, during the 1990s, commercial interests and the wider society provided Chinese sports with more opportunities for income.¹³⁵

The sports lottery system was established in 1998 (see figure 4.2), and is under regulations by the Ministry of Finance. The People's Bank of China and The Ministry of Finance decided that 60% of the lottery income would be used to promote mass sport, and the rest would support the *juguó tǐzhì*. The total lottery income by 2004 was 2,940 million RMB. Of this, 1,190 million RMB (40 %) went to elite sport and 1,750 million RMB (60%) was allocated to mass sport.¹³⁶

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 117.

By the late 2000s, the Chinese elite sport system had three sources of revenue: Central and local funding, commerce and sponsorship income; and lottery funding. About 60% of the budget was allocated from the central government, while the remaining 40% came from the sports lottery.¹³⁷ By the end of 2006, 10.1 billion RMB was invested in elite sport. The funding was used to improve the training facilities and living conditions for coaches as well as athletes, support for education for young athletes, provide medical support to elite athletes, and fund investments in sport science.¹³⁸ However, despite the new sources of income, Chinese sport is far from self-sustainable. With a few exceptions like football, basketball and table-tennis, the sport management centers still rely to a large extent on governmental funding.¹³⁹

During the 1980s and as discussed earlier, the Olympic strategy stressed the importance of a governmental funding of elite sport. According to Fan Hong, during the 80s and 90s elite sport consumed about 80 percent of the total state's sports budget.¹⁴⁰ Besides to sports budget, an extra-governmental funding for Olympic preparation was allocated. In preparation for the 1996 Atlanta Olympic Games, 65 million yuan (13 million US\$) was allocated for Olympic-related activities.¹⁴¹ Liu Fuming, suggested that the total cost of the Olympic preparation for the Beijing Olympics was more than 40 billion yuan (4.88 billion US\$) The majority of the funds was spent on wages to athletes and coaches, and on upgrading training facilities for the preparation of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games.¹⁴²

4.6. The Pyramid of Chinese Athletes

According to Hong Fang, China has one of the world's most effective systems for identifying, selecting and developing sports talents from a very young age.¹⁴³ As mentioned above, this system of selecting athletes was already established in 1957 with the directive "The Regulations of the Youth Spare-Time Sports Schools". Over the years, this system has developed, according to Fan Hong, into a three-level pyramid: primary, intermediate and high-level.¹⁴⁴ (see figure 4.1).

¹³⁷ Ibid., 116.

¹³⁸ Ibid., 117.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 116.

¹⁴⁰ Hong, "China," 38.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Ibid., 49.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 40.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

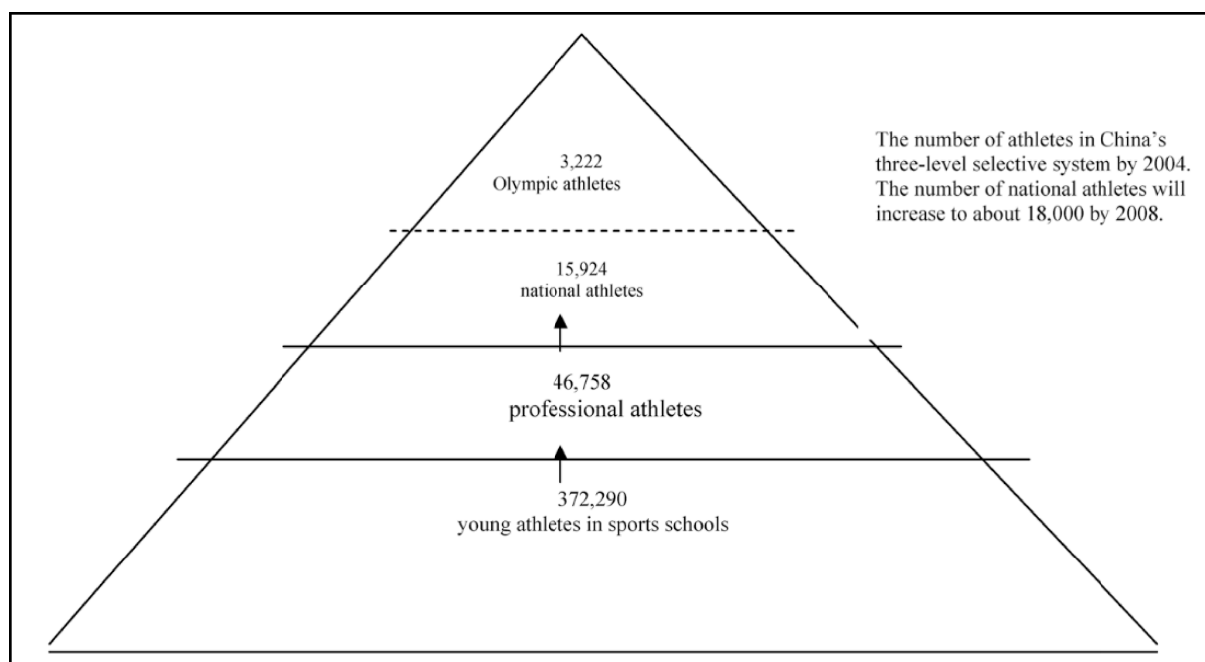


Illustration 4.3: Pyramide of chinese athletes. Hong, Wu and Xiong, "Beijing Ambitions", 518.

The spare-time sports schools (体校) which exists at the county, city and provincial levels is the typical starting point for a young aspiring Chinese athlete. They constitute the ground pillar of the pyramid of Chinese athletes. Boys and girls are recruited to local sports schools from an early age. This thesis suggests that coaches pick young kids whom they think have a bodily potential (身体条件) for a particular sport. For Taekwondo, this would mean tall children with long legs (身高和腿长), as long range is a significant factor in taekwondo. The spare time sports school provide kids with schooling, and they train approximately three hours per day, for 4-5 days a week.¹⁴⁵ After years of training, the most promising athletes get selected to go next level – joining teams at a provincial level or moving to a central sports school. These are semi-professional sports schools, Where athletes live on campus and train 4-5 hours, 5-6 days a week.¹⁴⁶ Many of the informants for this thesis were hand-picked from sports schools around in China to train Taekwondo and live at the Beijing Sports University (BSU). The BSU provides primary education, - middle school (国中) and high school (高中) - and has the status of a central sports school. BSU has a long tradition of training athletes, during the 1980s; BSU was the only sports school that selected students from all around China.¹⁴⁷ The main goal for these athletes is to become full-time professional athletes (正式运动员), to represent a province which need not necessarily be their home province, and ultimately reach the national and Olympic teams.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 41.

¹⁴⁷ Whitby, "Elite Sport," 131.

According to this study, an athlete must obtain sports ranking (拿运动成绩) in order to become a full-time professional athlete (正式运动员). All the young athletes I interviewed stressed the importance of becoming a full-time professional athlete. To become a full-time professional athlete is the only realistic and practical way to climb the pyramid. A status of a full-time professional athlete (正式运动员) provides the athlete salary and the opportunity to pursue a college or university education. Fong points out that before the 1990s the sports schools, which were then a part of the local sports commission, met all the cost of training and competition. As well as providing the athlete a free meal per day. After the 1990s, the costs have partially been placed on the parents.¹⁴⁸ To obtain sport ranking (拿运动成绩), athletes must be among top 3 in a major competition in China.

According to this thesis, here are three competitions of primary importance in China. The most important of them is the National Games (运动会), which is arranged every four years. In this national event, the best professional athletes fight for the glory, for their respective provinces. The second most important competition is the National Championship (国内锦标赛), which is arranged annually. The third is the Champion Competition, (冠军赛) which is organized at the end of each year. In Taekwondo, the top eight athletes in each weight category qualify for the Champion Competition (冠军赛).¹⁴⁹ Usually, a medal from the National and Champion competitions will qualify for sports ranking (运动成绩), but every province has different rules and practices regarding sports ranking as well as salary.

A full-time professional athlete represents a province and receives salary, insurance and benefits from provincial and national government bodies. The average wage of a full-time professional athlete is around 2000-4000 RMB per month.¹⁵⁰ The provincial government is also required to pay pension (according to my findings this is a one-time annuity for athletes who have obtained a sports ranking. Wages, salary and prize money, is a heavy burden on provincial government bodies. One of my informants, Cheng Fang¹⁵¹ from Liaoning stated: “we are too many full-time athletes, the wages and welfare are not good.” Provincial governments are facing an enormous financial burden in what Fan calls “Olympic drainage.”¹⁵² Athletes who win medals at international championships such as the Olympic Games, the Asian Games, and the World Championships are rewarded prize money from their province. Many local sports authorities have in fact spent much of their budget on covering expenses to coaches and staff, thus have nothing left to pay the pensions, salaries, and rewards

¹⁴⁸ Hong, “China,” 41.

¹⁴⁹ For more about competitions see *ibid.*, 42.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 41.

¹⁵¹ Each informant is given a pseudonym

¹⁵² *Ibid.*

to athletes.¹⁵³ Liaoning Province has had huge difficulties of paying prize money, wages and pensions. In a newspaper article, an official from Liaoning stated; “we are able to produce gold medallist, but unable to feed them” (多得起金牌,养不起冠军).¹⁵⁴ Many of my retired in told me that they had difficulties to receive their pension money (拿退金) after they retired from the provincial team.

On the top level of the pyramid (third and fourth level), and what many athletes strive for is to be selected to the National and Olympic team. Athletes on the top-level represents China on the international stage.¹⁵⁵ Hong (2008) points out that just 12 percent leave their local sports school to become a full time athletes.¹⁵⁶ (体校) The majority of the athletes remains at the bottom of the pyramid with little or no formal primary and secondary education.¹⁵⁷

4.7. Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter has given a historical introduction to the Chinese elite sport system. Chinese sports policy has always been shaped and developed by the state, guided by political and ideological requirements. The elite sports system was an adoption from the Soviet Union, and thousands of spare-time sports schools (体校) were established in 1957 and developed further in the post-Mao era. The success of the *juguo tizhi* stems from a focused selection system, systematic training from an early age, and economic investments for decades. To obtain sports ranking (运动成绩) and to become a professional athlete (正式运动员) is crucial for young Chinese athletes, as it provides economic security and an opportunity for higher education.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

¹⁵⁴ Hong, Wu, and Xiong, “Beijing Ambitions,” 526.

¹⁵⁵ Hong, “China,” 41.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 40.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 41.

5. Organization of Norwegian Sport – Mass and Elite Sport

Since 1992, Norway has experienced unprecedented success in elite sports. During this period, Norway has been among the top nations in the Winter Olympics winning 64 gold medals and 136 medals in total. Norway has also done historically well in the Summer Olympics, obtaining 18 gold medals and 43 medals in total in the same period.¹⁵⁸

This chapter aims to give an overview of the organization of elite sport in Norway. First, I will outline the factors behind the centralization of elite sport in Norway. I will then move on to discuss Olympiatoppen's (OLT) role as the center of elite sports knowledge and its vague but still important relationship with the sporting federations (SFs) of Norway. I will use fieldwork to describe how the Norwegian Martial Arts Federation (NKF) and the Norwegian National Taekwondo team works with OLT. Finally, I will discuss two distinctive features of the Norwegian sports model; - First the restrictions of early talent identification and second the voluntary club system as the ground pillar of the Norwegian sports system. These two structures of the Norwegian sports system is in fundamental contrast to the Chinese sports schools.(体校)

5.1. Project 88 – The Centralization of Elite Sport in Norway

The development of elite sport in Norway with governmental involvement and funding started at the beginning of the 1980s. Two main goals were set at the time -; Firstly, improving the conditions for the development of elite sport in Norway and secondly, ensuring that Norway was capable of hosting large international sporting events.

Augestad and Bergsgaard ask two important questions; First, what facilities the government's – attitude towards elite sport? Moreover, why does government's want to invest in elite sport?¹⁵⁹ Augestad and Bergsgaard utilize the Oakley and Green framework to identify the development of Elite Sport in Norway. The Oakley and Green (2001) framework proposes two events - “traumatic” and “focusing” events.¹⁶⁰ A poor performance in the Olympics can be characterized as a traumatic event. Focusing events is both winning an Olympic bid and hosting the Olympic Games.¹⁶¹ Augestad and Bergsgard identify three such incidents in the development of the Norwegian elite sports mode,- one traumatic and two focusing events. The first one (traumatic) was the poor performance in the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic Games. This poor performance, – increased the need and recognition for an independent elite sport

¹⁵⁸ Augestad et al., “The Institutionalization of an Elite Sport Organization in Norway-The Case of Olympiatoppen,” 293.

¹⁵⁹ Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 207.

¹⁶⁰ Green and Oakley, “Elite Sport Development Systems and Playing to Win.”

¹⁶¹ Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 207.

organization.¹⁶² As a result, The Norwegian Olympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF/NOC, hereafter denoted as NOC) initiated “Project 88”. “Project 88” was the starting point of a centralized elite sport organization. Despite poor results in the Calgary Olympic Games in 1988, the evaluation of Project 88 was mostly positive. It seemed like it was a consensus that there was a the need for a centralized elite athlete organization with resources and competence to support elite athletes.¹⁶³ The second (focusing) event, was Lillehammer's victory in 1988 in their bid to host the winter games in 1994. Thus, an elite sport organization was created in 1988, but under a new name, Olympiatoppen (OLT). The first effect was of Lillehammer's victory to host the games was increased governmental funding to OLT. The second was the growing acceptance within the sports community of the need for an independent and strong elite sport organization.¹⁶⁴ In 1990, the NOC was given the overall responsibility for both the development of elite sport and OLT. The last focusing event was Norway's success on home soil in Lillehammer in 1994 showing the first results of a centralized elite organization as the “medals spoke for themselves”.¹⁶⁵

5.2. Olympiatoppen – Center of Elite Sport Knowledge

Since Norway, as a relatively small country, has limited resources competence and knowledge in Elite Sport, a centralization was needed. The main purpose of Project-88 was to concentrate the knowledge in elite sports, sports science and medicine at one location.¹⁶⁶ The centralization would also serve as a way to build bridges between different sports – meaning a transfer of knowledge and competence in between the various elite sports environments. Toppidrettsenteret at Sognsvann in Oslo (the elite sport center) became the training center for elite athletes in Norway.

OLT's primary task is to provide medical support to elite athletes on the national team as well as operating a well equipped training center. In this center, elite athletes from different sports train together, receive medical treatment and take advantage of a range of physical tests. The range of services, the staff and the budget have increased since the 1990s, and today the center is divided into four sections; testing and training, health and laboratories for endurance and nutrition.¹⁶⁷

The training section's main purpose is to facilitate training and testing for elite athletes. In the training section, we find expert coaches in fields of strength, jumping, speed, flexibility and

¹⁶² Ibid., 206.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 207.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 208.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 198.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

coordination. In addition to running a well function training center, - the training section also evaluates, plan, implement training exercises, and testing regimes.¹⁶⁸ The health section provides services in medical treatment and rehabilitation, relating to injuries and illness as well as operating a 24-hour phone service for elite athletes, concerning doping and related issues. Also, the health section initiates research projects related to sports medicine.¹⁶⁹ The nutrition section primary expertise is the relationship between nutrition and performance and how to optimize the athletes body in regards to weight regulation. As well as support athletes with issues related to eating disorders.¹⁷⁰

5.3. The Centralization of Elite Sport – Vague Division of Labour between SFs and Olympiatoppen

The Norwegian elite sports system shares many of the same features as other various western elite sports models. These characteristics include a substantial centralized elite sports structure, governmental funding, and investment and emphasis on sports science and medicine. However, Augestad and Bergsgaard argues that there are also some distinguishing Norwegian features rooted in cultural and democratic political traditions.¹⁷¹ The first feature is the central government ambiguity towards elite sport. This ambiguity is reflected in the high degree of autonomy given to the National Sporting Federations (SFs). On the one hand, the government provides funding and legitimacy to the SFs, one the other hand a high degree of autonomy is given to the SFs. The SFs has the power to formulate an elite sport strategy without interference from OLT for the particular sport they govern.¹⁷² The second feature is strong norms and social-democratic traditions in Norway, which in turn provides the institutional context for elite sport development. According to Augestad and Bergsgard, this institutional context “moderate the enthusiasm for an emphasis on elite sport at the expense of sport for all.”¹⁷³

OLT's primary function is to advise and,- distribute scientific knowledge to the different SFs in their Elite sport strategy. However, how OLT works with the different SFs, - what demands and pressure it can put on an SF is somewhat vague. The quote below from policy document from NIF describes the vague nature in the division of labor between OLT and SFs:

“OLT has an overall responsibility for the results of the elite sport in Norway. In addition OLT has a responsibility to implement the Norwegian participation in the Olympic Games. OLT is – under the supervision from the Sports Board [of NIF/NOC] – to follow up the

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 198–199.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 199.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 195.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid., 214.

General Assembly's decisions regarding elite sport. The SFs have the total authority within their sport. As follows the SFs have the responsibility for all elite sport activity and all results in their field, and thus have the decision-making authority on all questions regarding their sport."¹⁷⁴

The division of labor between Olympiatoppen and SFs is thus not clearcut. The unclear division of labor has caused, according to Augestad and Bergsgaard, many intense discussions between SFs and Olympiatoppen.¹⁷⁵

Olympiatoppen possesses the power to (un)fund the Sporting federations with allocated funding for their elite sport strategy. Besides, OLT has the primary responsibility for the selection of athletes to take part in the Olympics.¹⁷⁶ OLT has the power to make demands and changes regarding an SFs elite sport strategy. For many SFs, notably the small ones who often have limited resources, they have no choice but to "listen" to OLT.¹⁷⁷ Augestad and Bergsgaard illustrate this from their study on this topic. An informant in a relatively small SFs claimed that since the funding from Olympiatoppen was the only source of income to their elite sport program, meant that they were "in the pocket of OLT". OLT controlled every aspect of their elite sport program.¹⁷⁸ The five big SFs (football, handball, ski, athletics and ice-hockey) have been critical towards OLT's involvement in their respective elite sport programs. They want more autonomy and control over their elite sport program and have been especially critical towards OLTs involvement in the process of hiring coaches on the behalf of the federations. From their perspective, hiring coaches should be decided by the SF and not by OLT.¹⁷⁹

Despite the conflicts and unclear division of labor, OLT's foremost goal is to be close to the individual athlete, the coach and to work in cooperation with the national teams and the SFs.¹⁸⁰ According to this study, the Norwegian Martial Arts Federations (NKF) cooperation with OLT is useful and fruitful. The assistant national team coach saw the transfer of knowledge in between different sports and coaches as one of the key success factors of the Norwegian model. He elaborated:

"In many other countries, there is no transfer of knowledge and no communication between different sports. Olympiatoppen always challenges us (coaches), - to develop new training methods, to strive for innovation and to develop yourself as coaches. I think one of the success factors of the Norwegian model is how we work together between different sports. Olympiatoppen is a good sparring partner. "

¹⁷⁴ NIF quoted in *ibid.*, 196.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁷ Augestad and Bergsgaard, *Toppidrettens Formel*, 84.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 84–85.

¹⁸⁰ Augestad and Bergsgaard, "Norway," 196.

The idea behind the RIO 2016 project was a direct result of the failure NKF to qualify any athlete to the London games 2012. He pointed out “We had to centralize and professionalize the national team”. The RIO 2016 project is the first time in NKF's history that – a full-time professional team is funded. To be a national team athlete includes a monthly salary, provides housing, covers all the expenses of training camps and competitions as well as having a medical team from OLT surrounding the athletes. However, he also told me that there is pressure to deliver results:

“We work our ass off to succeed.. and, of course, there is pressure to deliver good results. The European Qualification Tournament in January 2016, is not only important for RIO 2016, - to qualify for the RIO will have an enormous impact on the future of the national team. We have to qualify for RIO...”

NKFs cooperation with OLT is good and useful for both parties. However, if NKF do not deliver results or qualify any athletes for the Olympics, it seems that a good cooperation with OLT is not enough to keep the funding from OLT.

5.3.1. Funding of elite sport in Norway

The funding of elite sport in Norway is allocated through “tippemidler” (state sports lottery) similar to the financing of the Chinese system. From 2003, there was a considerable drop in commercial sponsorship. This gap was replaced by increasing governmental funding the same year. Public financing also constituted about 50% of all construction cost of the elite training facility, “Toppidrettsenteret” at Sognsvann in Oslo.¹⁸¹ The Norwegian government has from the start, been the major contributor to the development of elite sport in Norway. However, the government does not challenge the legitimacy and the way OLT and SFs are governed. Bergsgard and Augestad identify the passive role of the government and their ambiguity towards elite sport.¹⁸² The ministry states that “elite sport is important for organized sport”¹⁸³, and recognizes the responsibility to fund elite sport on a basis of cultural identification:

“The Government will support Norwegian elite sport financially so that the basis for an ethically and professionally qualified elite sport environment is secured, and so that elite sport may still be considered as a means of cultural identification in Norwegian society.”¹⁸⁴

Many of the smaller less commercialized SFs receive the majority of funding from NIF and OLT, this, as described above, increases the influence and power OLT has on the particular SF. On the other hand, it seems that the most commercialized SFs, - are more prone to choosing – their own path and oppose OLT.¹⁸⁵ Bergsgard and Augestad points out that it is

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 197.

¹⁸² Ibid., 214.

¹⁸³ Ibid., 197.

¹⁸⁴ in Stortingsmelding nr 14 quoted *ibid.*

¹⁸⁵ Augestad and Bergsgard, *Toppidrettens Formel*, 84–85.

hard to measure how much money is spent on elite sport in a particular SF, as all grants allocated to an SF is not earmarked but received in blocks.¹⁸⁶

5.4. The 24-hour Athlete

The purpose of the 24-hour athlete concept is to build up structures around elite athletes. Being an elite athlete requires to “live” like one. Top-level sport is a way of living, and this includes not only to the making of plans for the 4-6 hours of daily training, but also the remainder of the day. In addition to this, athletes have to make plans for the life after retirement from elite sport. Thor Ole Rimejordet, one of the founders of elite sport model in Norway explains; “As a serious athlete you have to consider that you are an athlete in a cycle of 24 hours, so that you get a balance between strain and rest....and between sport, education and social life.”¹⁸⁷

The 24-hour concept also includes professionalism, - finding practical and mental techniques to enable elite athletes to realize their full potential in a specific sport.¹⁸⁸ Already from the start of project-88, there was a focus to make the athlete responsible for his/her development and to build up structures around the athlete. P-88 worked together with the education institutions and the Army to facilitate the needs of combining study and military service. One of the characteristics of the Norwegian Elite system is the emphasis on education. It appears taken for granted that athletes have to focus on other things than only sports.¹⁸⁹ OLT also provides scholarship to elite athletes, divided into three types of scholarship; A (100,000 NOK), B (75000 NOK) and U grand (60000 NOK)¹⁹⁰. This is for many athletes their biggest sources of income. In 2005 OLT allocated 10.7 million NOK in grants to elite athletes.¹⁹¹

The Norwegian Taekwondo national team and NKF follow this line of thought. The individual athlete should be at the center, - the athlete is responsible for his/her development. A second emphasis is to build independent athletes – meaning that the athlete should not be dependent on his/her coach. A third aspect is a notion of sacrifice, the Norwegian elite taekwondo athlete sacrifices his social life, postpone job opportunities and sometimes education.

The assistant national team coach described the advantages of being a small, centralized team. He elaborated;

¹⁸⁶ Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 198.

¹⁸⁷ Rimejordet quoted *ibid.*, 203.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁸⁹ Augestad and Bergsgard, *Toppidrettens Formel*, 43–44.

¹⁹⁰ http://www.olympiattoppen.no/om_olympiattoppen/stoetteordninger/individuelt_utoeverstipend/page5457.html

¹⁹¹ Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 202.

“One of the advantages of being a small team is how closely we can work with the individual, - this includes individual training sessions, individual training programs as well as the “whole” package surrounding the athlete. We have cooperation with a private educational firm, which specializes in combining elite sport and education. Olympiatoppen to assist athletes in their choices regarding higher education as well as giving career advice.

One the other hand, he explained that there are too few elite taekwondo athletes in Norway, who has the dedication and who are willing to train full-time;

“I think we have it too “easy” in Norway...a strong welfare state that takes care of everyone, this is not a bad thing.. My point is that in other countries, sport is for many people the only way out of poverty, they fight to survive... In Norway, on the other hand, sport is primary for fun and socialization.

The Norwegian elite taekwondo athletes all have a strong dedication and love for the sport,- it is not a luxurious life style. There is a long tradition in Norway of putting the athlete in the center of his/her athletic development. The 24-hour concept is both a tool to prepare the elite athlete for a life after retirement from the sport, as well as the utilization of mental techniques to maximize the athletic potential of the elite athlete.

5.5. The Club and the Parents – The Ground Pillar of the Norwegian Sports System

The home club of the athlete is the ground pillar of the Norwegian sports system. The club system is based on voluntary work, and the clubs have limited resources. The club members and parents are the main contributors both in terms of money and effort. Bergsgard and Augestad (2007) suggest that parents are – the primary contributor to athletic development in the early years, followed by the club and the coach.¹⁹² All elite athletes at the taekwondo national team are a product of the Norwegian-club-system,- their interest in the sport began from a hobby-level, and then slowly developed into a love and dedication to their sport. One of the athletes elaborated;

“Without the support from the club and my parents, I would had never been where I am today. They have supported my both financially and morally. For many years, my parents and my club helped me to cover the expenses of traveling abroad to competition as well as training camps. I also worked part-time to save up money and used my confirmation money to pay for my expenses.”

In Norway, the progress of becoming an elite taekwondo athlete is long. Before and if an athlete get selected to the national team, all the expenses is put on the parents and the club. All the clubs in Norway has to follow the rules and regulations of NIF. One of these regulations is the restriction of early child specialization, which put considerable restrictions on talent identification.

¹⁹² Ibid., 205.

5.6. Regulations of Early Child Specialization

One of the characteristics of Norwegian sports system is the restrictions of early talent identification. These restrictions were implemented through the *Regulations for Children Sport* in 1987.¹⁹³ The regulations put a considerable restriction on talent identification, especially – for children under the age of 13. A child under ten years of age should avoid specialization in only one sport. For children between 10-13 years specialization in one particular sport should be limited.¹⁹⁴ The regulations also insists that “all exercise between competitions must be play-oriented, and all activities be suited to the physical and psychological development of the child and that learning is more important than achievement.”¹⁹⁵

The regulations primary goal is to stimulate the child's physical, psychological, and social development. Play and socialization are more important than competition. The aim of the regulations is to ensure that all children regardless of skill are allowed to participate in sports. These regulations of early specialization reflect a tradition in Norway, namely that sport is for everyone.¹⁹⁶ Augestad and Bergsgard interviewed a former consultant at OLT. He commented on the challenges of the regulations of early talent identification:

“We don't have a system for identification of talented athletes, but we have tried to increase the interest in training among the children, and this has partly been a success... The specific sport doesn't have a good system to pick talents. They don't evaluate the milieu, mental process, the parents' motivation, the trainers motivation and so on”¹⁹⁷

OLT has not developed any talent identification program. However, it is up to the individual SFs to design a talent program following the *Regulations of Children Sport*. The former head of OLT, Bjorge Stensbol, was even more radical arguing:

“I am certain that we have to select or choose athletes at an earlier stage than today. We should not be afraid of, especially in technically demanding sports that the athlete, maybe as young as nine or ten years of age, should pick the sport so he or she learns the necessary technical training in the golden age of motory.”¹⁹⁸

OLT is aware of the challenges the adherence to the regulations poses for achieving elite success. There is a huge debate concerning these regulations in different SFs and the media as well. I asked the assistant national team coach about the challenges considering restrictions of early child specialization in NKF;

¹⁹³ Ibid., 210.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 211.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 211–212.

¹⁹⁸ Dette sa Stensbøl quoted in *ibid.*, 212.

“We have to do the best under the circumstances. Our biggest challenges are strengthening the clubs; the clubs is the main provider of talent to the national team. We have developed a partnership-club system. All the clubs in partner-system get invited to workshops. In these workshops, we teach the club coaches the basic skills, - techniques, tactics, etc. Potential talents can join the “bridge project”. The athletes in the bridge program are between 16-19 years old, and the purpose is to prepare juniors for a senior career. The goal of is to be close to the clubs and give them the tools to develop their talents.”

NKF focuses on long-time development of athletes. Workshops and the bridge project are primary to enable clubs to develop potential elite athletes for the future. NKF's perspective is clear – For athletes in the junior category (<17 years of age) the primary goal is to get experience and preparation for a senior career. One of the demands for clubs in the partner club system is that club coaches have to send in videos of competitions for their respective athletes in the bridge project – as well as videos of potential new athletes,- to the national team coach. The national team coach has a database of potential elite athletes and talents. The local club coach is the main provider to video in identifying new talents. The national team coach has a database of potential elite athletes and talents. The local club coach is the main provider of video used to identify new talents. NKF acknowledges that it takes many years to build elite athletes and have designed a strategy that is effective in locating potential talents.

5.7. Conclusion

This chapter has described the centralization of elite sport in Norway both as an organization and the establishment of the elite sport center Olympiatoppen at Sognsvann in Oslo. OLT is the main provider of elite sports knowledge in Norway and supports national team athletes – having a team of experts surrounding the athletes. The 24-hour athlete concept has three main purposes;- One, to build independent athletes and teach them mental techniques to reach their full potential. Two, to build up structures around the athletes,-; a medical team, as well as funding a full-time professional team. NKF and OLT provide all the structures related to the elite taekwondo athlete. The athlete on the other hand sacrifices social life, some also postpone job opportunities and education bounded in a strong dedication and love for the sport. Finally, the 24-hour concept is an important tool to prepare the athlete for a life after their career. The regulations on early talent identification in Norway – forces NKF and the national team to use many years to develop elite athletes. The transformation into a full-time athlete is a long term process compared to the 3-month trial training period at Beijing Sports University (BSU).

6. Analysis

6.1. Selection of Athletes

The first part of the analysis has two purposes. First, will analyse the selection of taekwondo athletes in China and Norway. Afterwards, I analyse the athlete *docility process*; - i.e. transformation of the young athlete to a potential elite athlete.

China has one of the most effective systems for identifying, selecting and developing sports talents from an early age.¹⁹⁹ The local sports schools are the talent-pool; coaches go there to find *potential* athletes (身体条件好的) for a particular sport. This study shows, that coaches from Beijing Sports University (BSU) travel to local sports schools around in China to find suitable candidates for training taekwondo. The most common way to get into the BSU is being handpicked by the coach. The majority of the of the informants were handpicked (被选过来的) from a local sports schools (体校) in their hometown or province. Most of the these athletes are essentially a blank slate²⁰⁰ (白板儿), and do not know anything about taekwondo before they started training at the BSU. The second way to get into the BSU is a recommendation (推荐过来的) from a the provincial team or a local sports school 体校; these athletes has already been introduced to taekwondo at their local sports school.

The process of becoming an elite athlete is much faster in China than in Norway. A second difference that in Chinese Taekwondo, there is emphasis on “able to eat bitter” – and endure hardships (能吃苦). Taekwondo is their job rather than a hobby, some of the athletes I interviewed stated that they did not even like to train taekwondo.

Yong En’s¹³ account on how taekwondo “choose” him and rather than the opposite was a representative of many of the athletes I interviewed:

Q: How did you start training taekwondo?²⁰¹

A: I was “selected”. At that time, I was training athletics at the Hebei Provincial Sports School. They [the coaches from BSU] looked at my body and found it suitable for me to start training taekwondo.²⁰²

Q: At that time, did you like training taekwondo?²⁰³

A: When I arrived I did not understand what taekwondo was. It was first after I started training [taekwondo at BSU] I learn what [taekwondo] was like.²⁰⁴

199 Hong, “China,” 40.

200 白板, bǎibǎn, a blank blackboard (slate), - meaning a beginner

201 你为什么开始练跆拳道?

202 我是被选过来的, 当时去河北省体校选的, 当时我练田径, 他们看我身体条件适合

203 你当时喜欢跆拳道吗?

204 我不知道跆拳道是什么, 不明白, 练了以后才知道

Yong En¹³ did not say if he liked to train taekwondo or not. He stated after a while that he was merely adjusted to training. I was quite puzzled by his answer.

6.2. The Docility Process – Adjustment and Challenges

After an athlete gets selected by the coach, the athlete has a trial training period (自训时间), usually spanning two or three months. Gao Feng²⁴ a veteran, explained to me what a new athletes could struggle (碰到什么困难) with when arriving at BSU:

Q: What difficulties would a new athlete encounter when arriving at BSU?²⁰⁵

A: Because more and more people come from families with better material background, the first thing new athletes would struggle with is the supervision of athletes and the training intensity. The training will be hard [for them], and some will feel that the training is mentally and physically unbearable. Another point is how the coach restrains the athletes, [the athletes] adjustment to the team rules, which are quite strict. The [training and team rules] is the toughest part for a beginner.²⁰⁶

The two-month trial training period (自训时间) is what I conceptualize as the *athlete docility process*. The purpose is twofold. First, to find out if the young athlete is capable in terms of skills to be an elite taekwondo athlete. Second, to determine if the athlete can adjust to the weekly timetable and the rules and regulations. The older teammates (老队员) are like sponsors and take care (照顾) of the new young athletes. They help them to adjust to the training schedule, the team rules (队伍规定) and support them in the transition period. The athletes who are not suitable (不合适) in skill or cannot adjust to the team rules (队伍管理) are sent back to their local sports school. Wang Peng² described his transition period and the challenges he struggled with when he had just arrived at the BSU. He also elaborated on how the coach in the end will make the final decision on whom to keep and whom to send home:

Q: What challenges did you encounter when you just arrived at the BSU? Did you adjust to all the training and the new life at the BSU?²⁰⁷

A: Being tired from training was not a problem, but sometimes I felt that I did not have any skills. The difference in level between the older athletes and me was huge. I wanted to go back [to my sports school] and train and, return when I was at a proper level.²⁰⁸

Q: BSU has a lot of rules. Did you adjust to rules and regulations?²⁰⁹

A: When I arrived I felt that I couldn't stand it; it was like night and day²¹⁰

205 一般新人来会碰到什么困难

206 一般来说是管理和训练的强度，因为现在愈来愈多家里条件好，在训练时会比较吃苦，可能在心理上或生理上都会承受不了训练强度，和教练的约束，而且现在队伍管理也比较严，这是刚开始最难的部分

207 你刚来北体的时候碰到什么困难呢？训练很累，生活不习惯之类的？

208 累可以坚持，有时候觉得自己什么都不会，感觉跟他们差距很大，所以就想回去练，练好了再来这里

209 北体的规定很多，你刚来的时候，习惯吗？

210 刚来的时候比较接受不了，感觉天方夜谭

Q: Did you feel annoyed? (By all the rules)²¹¹

A: Yes! I was not adjusted to the rules. At that time I felt that there were too many rules, I felt a little bit restrained... When I lived at the sports school we did not have so many rules, you can do what you want, but when I arrived here (BSU) there is a lot of rules. I think to have rules is a good thing.²¹²

Q: When “new” people arrive BSU, there is a lot of stuff they don't understand, right?²¹³

A: Yes, but they will learn and understand it with time; some people do not even know anything about taekwondo.²¹⁴

Q: Did you have a trial training period?²¹⁵

A: Yes²¹⁶

Q: How long is the trial time?²¹⁷

A: Normally it is about three months. I had a two-month trial time, and now I have been here for two years.²¹⁸

Q: What happens to those who are not good enough?²¹⁹

A: The coach will send them back²²⁰

Q: Is it the coach's the decision or the athlete's?²²¹

A: Both, if you do not want to train and the coach agrees, then you can go back.²²²

Q: But normally a lot of people would like to stay at BSU?²²³

A: Yes, but the coach will look at your skills, [if you are not suitable to adjust to the life at BSU] the coach will send you back to your local sports school.²²⁴

Q: How do the coaches treat new athletes?²²⁵

A: The coaches are kinder to the new athletes. They teach them how to train; the basics skills (of taekwondo) .BSU stress the importance of the basics techniques, and then look at who is suitable for training taekwondo.²²⁶

Q: How do the older athletes treat you?²²⁷

211 你觉得很烦吗?

212 对, 很烦, 刚来的时候不习惯, 当时感觉规矩太多了, 有一点拘束, 以前在体校的时候规矩没有那么多规矩, 想干什么就干什么, 但是来了这儿有很多规矩。有规矩好啊。

213 新人刚来北体的时候很多事情都不知道是吗?

214 慢慢教会的, 慢慢懂, 有的人都不知道 (跆拳道是什么)

215 你有试训时间吗?

216 对

217 一般自训时间是多长时间呢?

218 一般的时间是两月, 他们都是三个月, 我就两月然后现在待两年

219 如果一个 (新) 人不行的话, 会怎么办

220 (把他送回去) 就送回去

221 是教练决定吗? 还是他们自己也可以决定

222 教练一方面, 运动员一方面吧, 你想不练了, 教练同意 (你也可以走)

223 一般来说很多运动员想留在北体吗?

224 对, 但教练看他们有可能不太适应练跆拳道不太适应北体的生活。

225 教练会对新人怎么样呢

226 对新人比较好了, 对新人比较好, 然后就教他们练东西吧, 练基本功, 因为北体很重视基本功, 然后看谁适合

227 老队员会照顾新人是吗?

A: Well, the older people take care of the new athletes, a lot of people take care of me²²⁸

Q: The older athletes will take care of you (athletes in the small team); it's like a family right?²²⁹

A: Yes, like a big family²³⁰

Q: So you like it here?²³¹

A: Yes, if I were to be sent back, I wouldn't stand it.²³²

Q: Why?²³³

A: I have been here a long time, it's all very familiar now, and I understand it now.²³⁴

Wang Peng² description was a common pattern among the athletes I interviewed. These athletes go through a challenging transformation process, to conform to the new rules, norms and life at the BSU. Wang Peng² had successfully been transformed into a *docile* elite athlete, as he had gotten “used to the life at the BSU” (习惯这里的生活).

During the trial period, the young athlete has a period to adjust to the training intensity. Besides, they must demonstrate a will to “eat bitter”, (吃苦) endure long and hard sessions and display their talent for the coaches. The older and more experienced athletes (老队员) act as sponsors; in *panoptic* terms – a semi *watchman*. The older athletes (老队员) task is to take care (照顾) of the inexperienced new athletes, teach them the weekly schedule, team rules and support them during training sessions. Being handpicked by the coach (被选过来) is already a good opportunity (是一个好的机会), and the new athletes work hard to make it through the grade. Passing the grades opens up more possibilities later, with the ultimate goal being to get sports-ranking (拿运动成绩) and becoming a full-time professional athlete (正式运动员).

The coach also appoints one male and one female team captain (队长). They function as, a communicator, between the coach and the rest of the team. The team captains (队长) have the overall responsibility for the boys and girls in the team. In every room, in the male dormitory, t an older athlete (宿舍长) who is appointed as responsible for the hygiene requirements in the room (see Appendix B). The coach and the older athletes functions as an extended family for the new athlete.

228 对老队圆儿会照顾新人，我生活当中很多人照顾我

229 因为我感觉老的运动员会照顾你们（小队），算一个家庭是吧

230 对，算一个大家庭

231 所以你觉得其实住这里很好吗？

232 嗯，很好啊，现在如果你让我回去，有点舍不得了

233 为什么？

234 时间长了吧，已经熟悉了，了解了

In Norway, the starting point for a young talent is normally on a hobby basis at the local club. It would usually takes many years of training before an athlete is a qualified to be selected to the national team. Another difference from China is the athlete's perspective on the sport. In China, taekwondo becomes a job which requires a willingness and ability to endure hardship (吃苦). For the Norwegian athlete, taekwondo is typically a free-time activity which is intensely enjoyed. Foucault's concept of the *Technology of the Self* fits very well with the Norwegian taekwondo athletes' dedication to the sport, which gives them both self-disciplined and self-governed.

6.3. The Weekly Timetable – a Panoptic Tool of Surveillance and Control

In this part of the analysis, I map out the weekly timetable for the different categories of Chinese athletes and then move on to map out the timetable for the Norwegian athletes. The weekly timetable is an important panoptic tool of surveillance and control. According to this study, the timetable is different for the various groups of athletes. The first tier of athletes, - has no sport ranking (运动成绩), and they are at the bottom of the pyramid of athletes (see. Fig). The majority of this group are in school age, in either middle or high school and combines education and training. Gao Li³, a 15 year old boy and a high-school student weekly timetable:

Table 1: Young unranked Chinese athlete

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00							
7:00	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	
8:00	C	C	C	C	C		
9:00						T	
10:00	T	T	T	T	T		
11:00							
12:00	L	L	L	L	L	L	
13:00							
14:00							
15:00	T	T	T	T	T	T	
16:00							
17:00							

18:00	D	D	D	D	D	D	
19:00							TM
20:00	C	C	C	C	C		
21:00							
22:00	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC
	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO

BF=Breakfast C=Class T=Training L=Lunch EC=Evening Call LO=Lights out TM=Team Meeting

The second tier of athletes, for example, Pei Hong Li⁶, a 19-year-old athlete. He has already finished high school. His timetable is mainly training and resting. The third tier of athletes, ranked athletes (运动成绩) have a similar timetable as Pei Hong Li, but they are allowed to attend classes in an off-season period. Pei Hong Li's weekly timetable:

Table 2: The young Chinese talent and ranked athletes

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00	R		R		R		
7:00	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	
8:00							
9:00	T	T	T	T	T	T	
10:00							
11:00							
12:00	L	L	L	L	L	L	
13:00							
14:00							
15:00	T	T	T	T	T	T	
16:00							
17:00							
18:00	D	D	D	D	D	D	
19:00							TM
20:00							
21:00							
22:00	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC	EC
	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO	LO

R=Running BF=Breakfast T=Training L=Lunch EC=Evening Call LO=Lights out TM=Team Meeting

As the Table 1 and 2 illustrate, the whole day of the Chinese athlete – ranked or unranked – is filled with scheduled tasks; these tasks binds the athlete to the training ground, the classroom, the canteen, and the dormitory, - all of which are located on the campus at BSU and within walking distance from each other. The unranked athlete, like Gao Li, has about 30 hours of training and 18 hours of class every week. Being exhausted from training athletes in this group could sleep during classes. The only requirement was to be present, while some others just skip class. Athletes like Pei Hong Li⁶ as well as ranked athletes have about 35 hours of training every week.

Sunday is the day for resting, and it is the only day athletes have time to go outside the campus. The athletes explained that Sunday was their “day off”. Some would just rest, others would go shopping or to the cinema. All athletes had to be back for the weekly team meeting from 19.00 to 21.00. Pei Hong Li described to me the content of the weekly team:

Q: What is the content of the team meeting?²³⁵

A: The coach will summarize this week training's, as well as the next week's training schedule. The coach will also discuss the general issues regarding training and so forth.²³⁶

Q: Will you also discuss some issues outside training, if some athletes have committed a mistake?²³⁷

A: Yes, he will, normally the athletes[on the team] commit few mistakes, but if someone commits a mistake (and gets caught) the coach will bring this up.²³⁸

The team meeting main has two purposes. The first is to summarize the last week of training; focusing on what to improve in terms of technical aspects and training drills. In addition, the training schedule for next week. The second purpose is what I conceptualize by utilizing the Foucauldian concept – correction of *abnormal* behavior. Athletes who have committed one of the four big mistakes (四个大错误) and get caught by the coach, will read out loud (念出来) their written self-criticism to the group during the weekly team meeting.

The evening call is what I conceptualize as a *panoptic* form of surveillance and control. The evening call (点名) is a routine. Every night at 21.30, a coach or a teacher will arrive at the dormitory to check if the athletes are present. The athletes go downstairs and line up outside the dormitory, and the coach or a teacher calls out the athletes' name. When being called, the athletes will answer “present” (在). At 22.00, the power is cut, and the gates of the dormitory

²³⁵ 开会的内容是什么?

²³⁶ 教练会总结一下这周的训练, 然后就是督促一下下周该什么训练, 或者说怎么样的状态, 去迎接下周的训练, 就这样。

²³⁷ 还会讨论一些生活当中的一些问题? 如果人错误了?

²³⁸ 嗯会会会, 但是犯错误比较少, 如果有犯错误的人 would 提出来

are closed. The coach would also sometimes come by unannounced for room inspection (查房), and to check if the athletes did not sneak out after curfew.

6.3.1. Timetable of the Norwegian athletes

Table 3 illustrates the weekly timetable of the Norwegian athlete. The first thing to point out is the big difference between training hours and free time compared to the Chinese athletes. Every day after 15.00, the Norwegian athlete has more or less the rest of the day free to do what he/she likes to do. The Norwegian athlete has around 21 hours of training a week. One reason for shorter training hours is the fact that the Norwegian athletes compete a lot more than the Chinese athletes at BSU. After a competition, athletes need longer time to recover and restitution and then prepare for the next competition.

The Norwegian elite taekwondo athlete has on average 1-2 competitions per month, compared to the Chinese athletes at the BSU that have 2-3 competitions per year. Two of the Norwegian athletes I interviewed studied part time. The national team coach supports his athletes to combine training and education. Others work part-time in the evenings to earn some extra money.

The Norwegian athletes train every day, but the training on Sunday does not start before 12.00 and Saturday evening is their evening off. Every Monday is for restitution, strength and core training at OLT. Every athlete on the team has an individual strength-program developed in cooperation between the national team coach and the training expert at OLT.

Table 3: Norwegian athletes

<i>Time</i>	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00							
7:00	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	BF	
8:00							
9:00	PT	TS	TS	TS	TS	S	
10:00							BF
11:00	L	L	L	L	L		
12:00							R
13:00							
14:00	CT	IS/TS	TS	IS/TS	IS/TS		
15:00							

16:00	
17:00	
18:00	
19:00	
20:00	
21:00	
22:00	CML CML CML CML CML CML CML
	LO LO LO LO LO LO LO

B=Breakfast L=Lunch PT=Power training CT=Core training TS=Team session IS=Individual session S=Sparring

R=Running CML=Check my level LO=Lights out

In Norway, Check My Level (CML) is an app that measures the daily training intensity.²³⁹ However, it indirectly functions as a panoptic tool of surveillance. The athletes have to log in (to measure the training intensity of the day) half an hour before going to bed. The Norwegian head coach will receive the data, which measures tiredness in the muscles, but also the time the athletes log in.

The Norwegian head coach stated that the primary goal of using CML was to adjust the daily sessions of the individual athlete accordingly to the session the day before. Normally, he would not check the time his athletes went to bed. However, if an athlete are exhausted during a session, he would ask the athlete in person when he/she went to bed. The Norwegian athletes are restricted to the timetable but are given a lot more personal time to use as one wish. Some of the athletes in the *challenge* group worked one or two evenings a week.

6.4. Written and unwritten team rules at BSU

I discovered five sheets of paper – the written team management rules (队伍管理), posted at the door of every room on the third floor of the male dormitory at BSU. The written rules are like guidelines that cover; management and disciplinary rules of training, financial rules, rules and regulations at the canteen and hygiene requirements at the dormitory and the training facilities (see Appendix B). For the purpose and relevance of this thesis, I analyse one of the five sheets of the written team rules; *BSU (北体) Taekwondo Team Training Discipline and Management Rules* associated with *disciplinary technologies* of the training grounds.

²³⁹ For more information see <http://checkmylevel.com/>

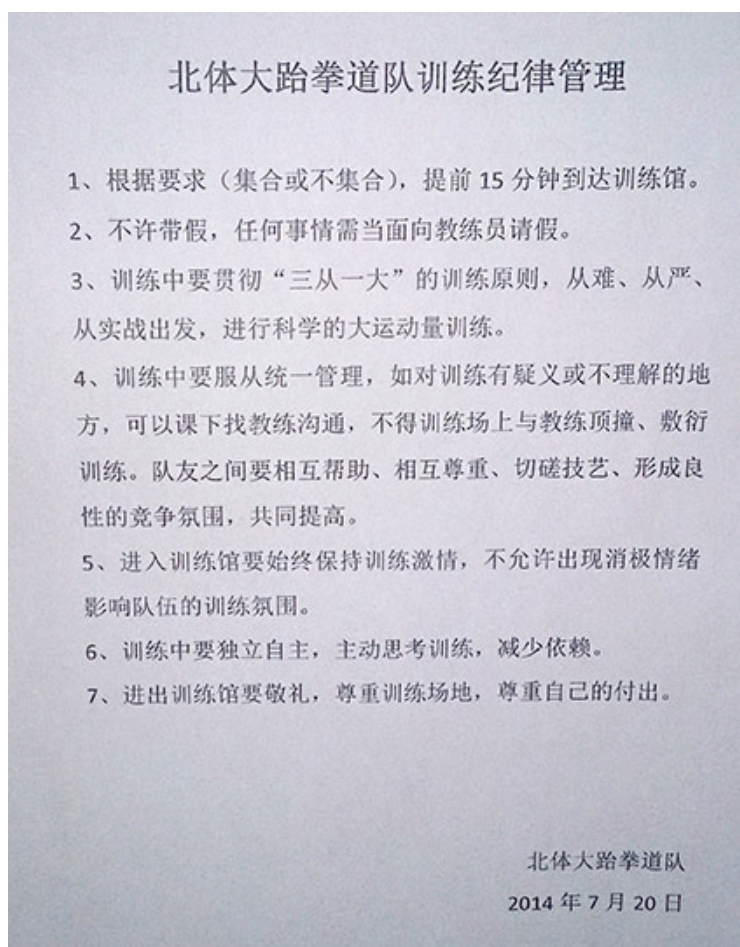


Illustration 6.1: Photo taken by the author

Beiti (BSU) Taekwondo Team Training Discipline and Management Rules

1. According to the requirements (Assembly or not) [you] must be at the training grounds 15 minutes before the [session].
2. [Athletes] are not allowed to [use] teammates to ask for leave on their behalf, you must ask the coach in person.
3. During training [athletes] must carry the principle of three follows to one great amount, i.e. Follow the demanded training, follow the strict training and do train as if it was in a real competition.
4. During sessions, [athletes have to] to obey the team rules. If [you] have any doubt, or [something] you don't understand, [you] can talk to the coach after training. Do not contradict the coach at the training ground or train half-heartedly. Teammates must help each other, respect each other and improve each other's skills to create a good competitive atmosphere and improve together as a team.
5. [After] entering the training facility [you] must [from start until the training is finished] preserve a training passion. [Athletes] are not permitted be negative or show negative feelings [which can] influence the rest of the team.
6. During sessions [athletes] must be independent, take initiatives to reflect on their own training and reduce the dependence [on others].
7. When entering/exiting the training ground [athletes] must salute to each other, [pay] respect to the training ground. Respect your own hard work.

The BSU Taekwondo Team Training Discipline Rules serve as guidelines for athletic conduct during sessions. These rules are associated with *The Disciplinary Technologies of Elite Sports at the training grounds*. Rule number 1 is especially important. Pei Hong Li reviled the consequences of arriving too late. In one instance, the boys on the team, had misunderstood and arrived at 9.30 instead of at 9.00 on one occasion. When they arrived, they were reprimanded and sent right to the track and field to run as punishment (挨罚). The Chinese coach utilizes the Foucauldian concept of punishment as a way of *normalizing*. The purpose of the punishment is to encourage the athlete to act *normal*, within in the norms set by the team rules. Arriving late is a violation of the team management rules (队伍管理).

The rules except number 2 are team rules that describe how athletes should conduct themselves during practice. It clearly states a rigid coach-athlete hierarchy. The athletes are not under any circumstances allowed to contradict the coach during training. Gao Li³ summarized the written rules like this:

“These rules, all of them are very important rules; none of them is trifle rules. Every person on the team has his or her responsibility for some rules, for example, hygiene in the room; some have to do cleaning, the desk and bookshelf have to be tidy. Every morning we have to fold the quilt and pillow. At the canteen, we cannot waste food. After we are finished eating, we have to put the dinner set at the right place, if we don't to it, it will be a hassle for the worker. When we enter the training facilities, we have to bow because it is a holy place. We are all working hard and pouring out sweat [during training]. When we greet the coach, we also have to bow. When we exit the training facilities we have to bow, all this is to respect our own efforts.”²⁴⁰

Every aspect of daily life of the Chinese taekwondo athlete exists within a rigid framework. The second picture explains the rules concerning financial matters(see Appendix B) The coach has the power to monitor the athlete's monthly allowance. The third picture describes the rules concerning nutrition. The fourth and fifth picture explains the hygiene requirements at the dormitory and training grounds. I pay great attention to how Gao Li describes the training ground as “a holy place” (神圣一个场地). A place where the athletes work hard, pour out sweat, - a *disciplined* place of training.

6.4.1. Unwritten team rules – The four big mistakes

The other part team rules of the are concerned with the unwritten ones. These unwritten rules put considerable social restrictions on the athletes. I conceptualize them as – the four big mistakes (四个大错误); the curfew (夜不归宿), dating within the team (不允许谈恋爱), smoking

240 那些规矩嘛，都是一些就是特别重要的规矩，没有那些七零八碎的规矩一般就是每个队有自己的队规嘛，嗯然后卫生啊，房间啊，打扫啊，书柜上的东西啊，摆好了，装铺每天都要起床的时候叠被子然后在餐厅吃饭不要浪费，吃饭之后，要把凳子放进去，不然的话会对餐厅师傅造成很大麻烦。然后还有进去训练馆要鞠躬因为这是一个就是很神圣一个场地，我们都在那里训练，挥洒汗水。然后也要跟教练看到他们也要鞠躬，出了训练馆也要鞠躬对场地，算是对尊重自己的付出吧。

or drinking (不允许抽烟喝酒). If these rules are broken and the athlete/s get caught, the athlete/s in person will receive a physical punishment. Followed by a process of rehabilitation, through first writing and then during the weekly meeting reading out the self-criticism in public in front of the team. However, I will analyse how the athletes would challenge these social constraints – using methods to break the rules without getting caught, such as “having fun in secret” (偷偷地玩儿) and “dating in secret”, (偷偷地谈恋爱). Some older athletes would even break the rules with the coach knowing. My study also indicates that when an athlete reaches a certain age and have sport ranking the coach will give them a some private space (一点空间). The coach even sometimes turns a blind eye when discovering older athletes dating, as long as it does not influence the training. However, still dating within the team is strictly forbidden. The coach would be a lot stricter towards young athletes and those without sport ranking. My study shows that the *hybrid identity* or resistance to these rules are higher among the older ranked athletes (老队员).

Ou Yang¹³ describes the “unwritten” team rules as follows:

Q: What kind of rules and regulations do the athletes have at BSU?²⁴¹

A: BSU's rules are good, you are not allowed to smoke, drink alcohol, these you cannot violate, [if] you do, you will suffer a substantial punishment, but other mistakes [if] you get caught are not that serious. BSU are really strict, for example you cannot be out after curfew, dating is not allowed, you cannot go out for a drink, you have to be back at a certain time, you cannot be late (for example for training), boys and girls cannot wear too fancy clothes, and some other small rules. Girls cannot have long hair (covering the ears,) not wear earrings or put on makeup. Boys cannot have fancy hairstyles. Boys cannot dress themselves to attract girls.²⁴²

The rules concerning hairstyles, clothes, makeup and so on is a method to make the athletes conform to the homogeneous athletic identity. Boys and girls are to dress in the same matter, their hairstyles are similar, neglecting an individual style. The primary purpose of these rules is to foster a common group athletic identity.

Yu Zhang⁵, one of the older and more accomplished active athletes on the team, elaborated on the reasoning behind the team management rules:

“The team management rules, it is...every sports team has a management system. But the system of rules and management and the method is different, here [at BSU] we are probably even stricter [than other places] this is a sport college, athletes cannot have relationships, the scope of the management system is a stricter...but I still think this is good for the athletes, and it can help us.”²⁴³

241 在北体有什么规定?

242 不能抽烟喝酒, 你不能去违背, 会受到很大的惩罚的, 但是其他地方抓到可能没那么严重, 北体就很严格, 例如不能夜归宿, 不能谈恋爱, 不能出去喝酒, 规定时间内不能不回来, 也不能迟到, 男女都不能奇装异服, 还有一些小东西他会列清单出来

243 这个, 一个队伍的管理嘛, 就是, 运动队肯定会有管理, 但是管理的方式不一样, 这边的管理比较可能比较更严格, 因为这边凭恃是学校嘛, 学生不能感性啊, 违犯这些会大一些 我还是觉得对我们

Q: [the team management rules] is to help [the athletes] to focus on training?²⁴⁴

A: Yes, it [can help us] to restrain us only to the training.²⁴⁵

Yu Zhang and Ou Yang seem to agree partly with the reasons behind the strict team rules. A majority of the older athletes, even though they all complained (觉得很烦) about the rules, said that they partly agreed that they had to be restrained in their training.

There are mainly two reasons why the coaches are stricter towards the young athletes. The first reason is the fact that many are very young; the youngest team members were just twelve years old, and many don't understand (不懂事) and can put themselves in potentially dangerous situations. Yu Zhang⁵ also explained that the coaches have to take more responsibility towards the young underage athletes: "At home the parents will take care and manage their kids, after all, when they have left their home [and live at BSU] then it is the coach who has to manage them."²⁴⁶ The coach is also responsible for the safety of the athletes under 18 years old. Cheng Fang¹⁸ elaborated and gave me more details of why the coaches are a lot stricter towards children and teenagers on the team:

Q: Does the coach look at the age of the athlete when it comes to the management team rules? Will the coach be stricter towards younger athletes, because "they don't understand"[他们不懂事儿] and have little life experience?²⁴⁷

A: Yes, [the coaches] will be a lot stricter, because the coach is responsible for the younger athletes, in fact it is a responsibility, because the kids [are underage] at BSU has not much life experience, if something happen to them, the parents will make the coach responsible. The coach has a huge responsibility. When we were sick or had a fever, or had a more serious condition, the coach had to take responsibility. In fact, this is a huge responsibility [for the coach] and it is not easy for them [the coach] as well.²⁴⁸

Younger athletes, primary on the beginner team (小队) also has to hand in their cell phones to the coach. The cell phones were only given to them on Thursdays and Sundays. Older athletes would usually have their own cell phone and laptop.

6.4.2. Dating and having fun in secret

"Do you guys secretly go out to have fun?" "Of course we do, we are all young people!"

This part of my analysis describe how the athlete use subtle ways and strategies to challenge the system. My impression is that many of the younger athletes, especially on the beginner

自深的运动员比较有帮助.

244 帮助你们专心训练吗?

245 对对, 可以约束我们很专心

246 因为在家里父母管啊, 毕竟他们离开家里是教练要管啊

247 其实你们会分别年龄吗? 在规定上, 年龄比较小的, 教练会管得比较多, 他们不懂事儿其

248 对对因为(教练)要负责, 其实对他们有一个责任, 因为他们这边儿他们属于没见过人了, 在这边儿出事儿的话家长会找他们(教练)责任特别大, 他们那个时候特别不容易, 我们那个时候出事儿的时候比如说感冒啊, 发烧啊, 特别严重病的话, 就(教练)他们要责任的, 所以其实他们也不容易

team (小队) and those without sport ranking would not dare break the rules. Most, of the active athletes, told me that they would not dare to commit a mistake (不敢犯错). But still some of the older athletes would sneak out after curfew. Yu Hua⁵ elaborated on some occasions where the older athletes (老队员) would sneak out to have fun (偷偷地玩儿). He also revealed that the male coach would on rare occasions invite some of the older athletes out for a drink and discuss problems within the taekwondo team.

Q: Do you guys secretly go out to have fun?²⁴⁹

A: Yes sometimes, if someone have birthday, we go out for dinner²⁵⁰

J: Do the coach let you go or do you go out secretly?²⁵¹

A: Normally in these situations we will all sneak out, but the [male] coach, on rare occasions take the older boys out to dinner to talk²⁵²

Q: Then he will look at the age of the athlete, right?²⁵³

A: Yes, and at the person's personality and if he is matured (比较成熟地), if he understands stuff 比较懂事儿的) and not too of a large generation gap. Some kids can't talk to the coach in that way... they [the kids] don't understand. (不懂事儿) It's probably the older athletes in the team. The coach will discuss some issues, and they will talk like brothers, more openly, not like the coach talk to us during the [weekly] meeting. I guess is one method to communicate on a deeper level.²⁵⁴

Older athletes on the team are given a little space (有一点空间) by the coach, but still, they would typically sneak out in secret (偷偷地). This example was a common pattern among the ranked older athletes on the team; the *hybrid identity* is stronger in this group of athletes – the full-time professional athletes (正式运动员). The coach is also dependent on this group as they are the best athletes on the team. When it comes to dating, Yu Hua⁵ also revealed how the coaches treat different groups of athletes in different ways. He explained to me the nuances:

What about dating?²⁵⁵

When it comes to dating, it's not that strict [for older athletes], because some athletes have already reached "that age", then he coach will not care too much, but dating within the team is strictly prohibited.²⁵⁶

249 那你们会偷偷的出去玩儿吗?

250 也有, 肯定, 加入过生日啊, 或者喜事啊过什么节偶尔会聚一下

251 教练会让你们去吗? 还是你们偷偷的去吗?

252 一般的这种情况下我们都是会偷偷地去, 然后另外教练有时候偶尔跟我们谈谈心, 坐在一起聊天, 然后会有喝酒

253 这个要看你的年龄, 是吗?

254 也不看年龄, 也算看年龄吧, 就是看个人吧, 跟你比较懂事儿, 说话没有代沟, 有的小孩你跟他聊的, 他不懂, 也算是年龄比较大吧, 队里比较老的。他会跟你聊一些问题, 因为那样的(方式)聊起来像亲兄弟一样, 放得开, 不像开会的话那么拘谨。算是换一种(沟通的)方式。

255 谈恋爱呢?

256 谈恋爱的话, 还好吧, 因为有的已经到年龄了, 教练不会怎么管, 但是队伍 是禁止谈恋爱的

Q: But, generally speaking, dating is a serious matter?²⁵⁷

Q: Yes, this is a serious matter, but there are some exceptions, age is one factor, and if you are not retired [stopped training], but older athletes [have some freedom]. But normally dating is not allowed.²⁵⁸

What is the “dating age”?²⁵⁹

A: At least 26, over 26... I guess the coach will keep the one eye open, and the other closed... the coach will not allow dating among teammates, but if you are [an older athlete] and date someone outside the team and then it's “ok”. The coach will still worry if [your dating] will influence the training. At BSU, a lot of people that have been sent away [开走] because of dating [within the team]²⁶⁰

Dating is a topic that often creates a high level of conflict (矛盾) between ranked athletes and the coach.

6.4.3. Forbidden Love – A story of a Nie Yong and Hui Fang

Two former athletes on the team went against these regulations and dated in secret and even continued later after the coach discovered their relationship. One of them was Nie Yong¹⁹, a former gold medal winner (冠军) of the Chinese National Championship as well as former national team member. He explained that they both were told by their coach to end their relationship on several occasions. Since he was a full-time professional athlete, it was in the coach's own interest to keep him in the team. The conflict between him and his coach lasted over many years, and culminated when he and his girlfriend escaped from the BSU. The couple was on the run for over two weeks and refused to talk to the coach who tried to get them back to the BSU. It all ended when the coach decided to talk to their parents and their parents convinced them to return to BSU.

6.5. Correcting “abnormal” behavior through punishment and written criticism

In this part, I analyse the self-criticism ritual; i.e, the process when an athlete gets caught breaking one of the four big mistakes (四个大错误). The process of physical punishment and then the rehabilitation process of writing and reading the self-criticism during the weekly meeting. Using Foucauldian terms, this constitutes correction of *abnormal* behaviour through psychological punishment (挨罚) and self-criticism.

Cheng Fang¹⁸, one of the older athletes (老队员), is still a part of the team but was not training anymore. He studied at master level and had been on BSU for over a decade. He described the

²⁵⁷ 这个算大事儿，是吗？

²⁵⁸ 对，这个算是大事吧，但是一些特殊人例外，年龄确实人家没有退役，但是年龄特别大了。一般是不允许这样的

²⁵⁹ 可以谈恋爱的年龄大概是几岁呢？

²⁶⁰ 他们觉得跟对里的人不要谈恋爱，跟队友不要谈，跟外面的人谈没系，他是怕跟队友会影响训练，北体有很多因为谈恋爱离开的人

process when getting caught of a breaking one or several of the unwritten team rules, and the following process of physical punishment (挨罚), followed by a process of a written self-criticism. (件套)

Q: Why and when do you need to write self-criticism?²⁶¹

A: When you commit a mistake [and get caught], first you will receive a punishment, right? When you commit a mistake, you have to know deep in your heart that you committed a mistake and read it out in front of everyone (during the weekly meeting). This is also a warning to everyone to not commit a similar mistake.²⁶²

Q: What kind of mistakes qualify to write a self-criticism, can you tell me one example?²⁶³

A: For example, “big head” (大头) [a former athlete at the team], he played online games all the time, and he did not show up for training. The coach would first discuss this issue with him, and would tell him to write a self-criticism report. For example, if it was you and you are an athlete, [and you made a mistake and got caught] you have to tell the coach: “Coach I made mistake, I was at the Internet café, I will work hard at training”. The coach will talk sense to you, you will answer, “I understand, I know.” Then you will write a self-criticism after you have written it, you reflect and think about it. To write a self-criticism is like that.²⁶⁴

Q: And then during weekly team meeting you will have to read out in front of everyone?²⁶⁵

A: Yes²⁶⁶

Q: Why? Why do you need to read it out loud?²⁶⁷

A: It is the same if you perform well, the coach will also stand up and talk about you.... like if you (Joe), “your performance during training is excellent and you have also won a lot competitions” (you are a role-model). When commit a mistake, it’s just the other way around. (During the meeting), you stand up, and reflect and tell everyone that you are sorry for your online gaming habits, I think this is a good thing, to give everyone a warning...a warning that other athletes should not do the same mistakes.²⁶⁸

Q: Have you written a self-criticism report?²⁶⁹

A: Yes²⁷⁰

Q: Why did you have to write? What kind of mistake did you commit?²⁷¹

261 你们为什么要写?

262 你犯错以后首先要犯行, 对不对? 我们犯行不说你不共享这个东西, 你要是, 你要落实到心路上, 错读给大家, 还有给大家一个提到一个就是说反面正, 那不是榜样的

263 你犯什么错误才能写检讨, 你可以举一个例子吗?

264 就是比如说先说大头那个事儿, 一直在上网, 不训练了, 这个事儿, 教练跟你谈, 觉得你要会改了, 你就要写一份儿检讨, 可能要念, 比如你是教练我是运动员, 教练我错了我在那个上网了我好好训练, 教练说跟你讲道理, 我试试明白了, 他跟你讲很多道理, 你会 (我明白了, 我试试) 我知道了, 你会说你写一个检查了, 你写一个检查完了回头自己反思反思, 好好想一想, 写了检查, 会这样.

265 你开会的时候要念出来是吗? 给大家听?

266 对对

267 为什么是这样呢? 为什么要给大家听?

268 就是你表现好的话, 教练会让你站出来说。Jo (优你训练不错, 你表现特别好而且拿了那么多冠军你犯错也要一样, 然后出来你反思, 对不起大家我这个上网, 这个是一个好的, 给大家大家一个那个提醒, 提醒大家, 你们不要这样做

269 你写过吗?

270 写过

271 你为什么要写, 犯什么错误呢?

A: It was during The National Games ad we got into a fight. After the National Games, we wrote 50 self-criticism reports... my god... They were long.²⁷²

Q: Did you write them yourself?²⁷³

A: Yes²⁷⁴

Q: How did the coach find out?²⁷⁵

A: Back then Li Gao, Wang Peng and I and went out drinking, at a bar, some drunk guy wanted trouble and started to fight. The security guard filed a report to the police, then the coach knew.²⁷⁶

Q: Did the three of you receive a punishment?²⁷⁷

A: Yes, [when we returned home after the games, the same night] we ran on running track, from 21.00 in the night to 9.00 the morning, next day and then went straight to training!²⁷⁸

Q: When was this?²⁷⁹

A: The National Games, back in 09²⁸⁰

Q: Is it as strict now as it was back then?²⁸¹

A: Yes, when it comes to serious offenses I think it the same...at that time we already were quite old.²⁸²

Q: So you have to look at what kind of mistake you have made?²⁸³

A: Yes, small matters, being late, surfing the internet (not overdue it [like Big Head] 太过分). In this cases, normally you wouldn't write a self-criticism. When it comes to dating you also have to look at the particular case.²⁸⁴

The most important function is not to write self-criticism, but rather reading the confession out in public. Some of the older athletes told me that when they had to write a self-criticism they would download a template of a self-criticism online, then re-write it to fit the mistake they committed. Self-criticism also function as a warning (提醒) to the group does not commit the same mistake. Martin Schoenhals (1993) points out the function of reading the written self-criticism to the group as “a form of punishment, the student is not only criticized, but criticized by himself and have to make an appearance of confession, a confession that is made public.”²⁸⁵ Li Cheng account on the process of writing self-criticism fit well with Bjørge

272 我们全国会的时候，打架，完了写了 50 是个检查，哇赛，写了多长，累死了但没读

273 你自己写吗

274 自己人家

275 教练什么发现呢？

276 那个时候我，朱圣鹏，秦龙，我一般人男孩出去喝酒，去那个酒吧喝酒，有一个人找事儿，喝迷的糊的，给打了打开嘛保安报警，报警了，然后教练知道了

277 你们三个人受到挨罚吗？

278 然后要挨罚挨罚，跑了一宿，晚上 9 点跑到早上 9 点，9 点开始训练

279 这个是什么时候？

280 09 年全运会的时候

281 现在不会那么严格吗？

282 其实大事儿的话是一样，那时候已经挺大了，年龄挺大的，那个事儿其实比较大，

283 要看事儿，是吗？

284 对，小事儿，迟到，上网，被抓了，一般不会写检查，谈恋爱的话，也分

285 Schoenhals, *The Paradox of Power in a People's Republic of China Middle School*, 35.

Bakken's (2000) concept on *exemplary models*. According to Cheng Fang¹⁸ example the coach could use an excellent athlete (优秀的运动员) as a model of the for the athletes to learn from (效法). But also using a *non-exemplary* model, the athlete who has committed a mistake as a warning of *abnormal* behaviour to other athletes in the group.²⁸⁶

Bakken (2000) has this definition of the function of self-evaluation (自我检查) and self-criticism (件套):

Self-evaluation is regarded as the basis for other people's actions. Students and employees, teachers, cadres, and leaders should all undertake self-evaluation. One should constantly check and reflect over one's attitude toward the norms. Self-improvement and social improvement are presumed to go hand in hand, and self-improvement is said to strengthen the administration. Self-improvement is first and foremost about restraining oneself, and acting in accordance with the collective rules. Self-evaluation has since time immemorial been institutionalized in the formal theatre of self-criticism."²⁸⁷

Following his Bakken line of thought, self-criticism is also a form of self-constraining. The pre-emptive effect of the warning given by a convicted athlete sends a message to act in within the norms set by the team management rules (队伍管理). Analysing self-criticism in Foucauldian terms, self-criticism can be seen as a way to correct *abnormal* behaviour. If an athlete get caught in breaking one of the four big mistakes (四个大错误) the athlete must go through a process of first receiving physical punishment (挨罚). And then, the coach will tell the athlete to write a self-criticism that is read out (念出来) to the whole group during the weekly team meeting.

6.6. Nutrition section at OLT – A Panoptic System of Surveillance and Control

According to Augestad and Bergsgard, (2008) Olympiatoppen has invested to increase the availability of scientific knowledge, especially in fields of nutrition. The goal is to establish routines and educate the national teams about the relationship between physical activity and nutrition. The task of coaches and staff surrounding the athlete is to transfer this knowledge to the athletes. Augestad and Bergsgard elaborates;

“The task of providing information is dependent on having a team of professionals who can assist in the dissemination of the relevant knowledge: trainers, doctors, physiotherapists, and other support personnel who the undertake the 'missionary work' in spreading 'the word' concerning 'the right diet path' [for the elite athlete] to follow.”²⁸⁸

OLT offer nutrition courses for the national teams to build and spread the knowledge about the relationship between nutrition and physical activity.²⁸⁹ In weight class sports such as

²⁸⁶ Bakken, *The Exemplary Society*, 176–180.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 247.

²⁸⁸ Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 203.

²⁸⁹ Augestad and Bergsgard, *Toppidrettens Formel*, 196–197.

boxing, judo, wrestling and taekwondo is yet another element body weight, athletes want to “fit” in the right weight class. Since taekwondo is a weight-class sport, the national team works closely with the nutrition section at OLT. According to my study, in early 2012, the Norwegian national team athletes dietary habits were scrutinized. Hence, the athletes who did not have a “satisfying” dietary regime were given an individual dietary program. This dietary program functions as a guide for suggestions on what, when and how often to eat. All the athletes on the national team also had to take a DEXA-scan (dual-energy-X-ray-absorptiometry – measures fat mass)²⁹⁰ to find the optimal relationship between muscle mass and fat and their Olympic weight class. Joseph⁴, one of the informants, was considering dropping down in weight, he elaborated:

“I considered dropping from the -80 kg Olympic weight class to 68 kg. After the DEXA-scan, it was clear that the price to pay was too big. The nutrition team ruled out the possibility, as I had to lose too much muscle mass. It was out of the question.

The national team assistant coach explained that issues regarding the athletes health and weight monitoring is decided by OLT alone, “we do not overrule Olympiatoppen decision regarding weight regulation, sickness or injury.”

OLT maps out elite athlete's dietary habits. The overall goal is to improve well-being and to reduce sickness. As a consequence, the athletes have more energy for training.²⁹¹ The individual diet program is planned in coordination with a team of experts, which transform theoretical and scientific knowledge into solid practices. Additionally, OLT has clinical experts and psychologist to treat athletes who are in a risk or have developed an eating disorder.

The nutrition program at OLT can be seen as form of *panopticism*, as it maps out the dietary habits of athletes and monitors the athlete's health. Bergsgaard and Augestad argues:

“Diet is only one of many variables in the web of factors that need to be controlled in the daily lives of the elite athletes, but it is one that Olympiatoppen considers highly significant and thus one in which it invest considerable resources.”²⁹²

This kind of surveillance and control is only possible by spreading knowledge and educating the athletes. Through guidance and education, the athletes become their own supervisors. The nutrition team monitors the athlete's health based on scientific knowledge and tests.

290 Augestad and Bergsgard, “Norway,” 204.

291 Ibid.

292 Ibid., 205.

6.7. Pyramid of the Chinese and Norwegian Taekwondo Athletes – Competitive Incentives

In this section, I analyze the competitive elements in the pyramids of Chinese and Norwegian athletes. I will also draw upon my field work to look at the narrative of the drop-out Zhao Feng, as well as point out the vulnerability of young athletes with no sport ranking.

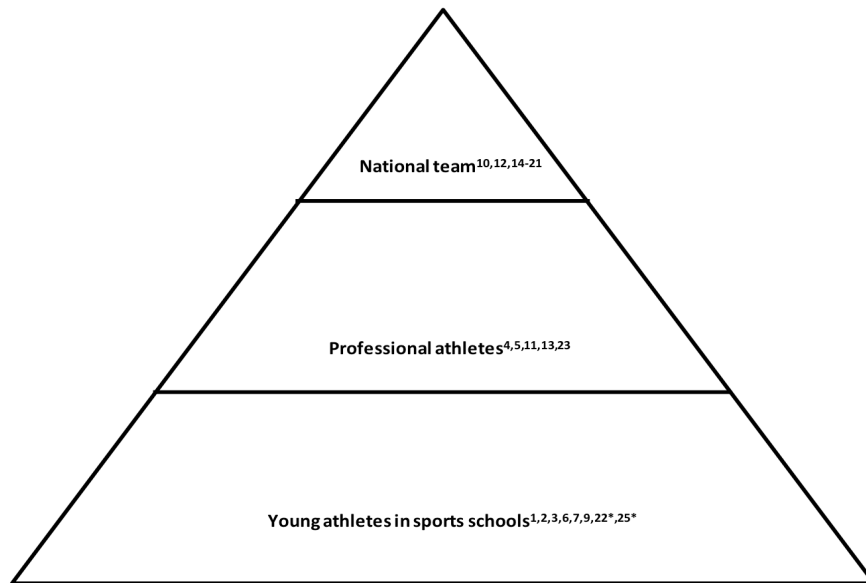


Illustration 6.2: Pyramid of the Norwegian elite taekwondo athletes. Designed by the author.

Illustration 6.2 is a descriptive pyramid of the Chinese elite taekwondo athletes at the BSU. (see Appendix C) The first thing to point out is the importance of sport ranking. To obtain sport ranking is one of the most important goal of younger athletes. Xiao Gao⁷, a talented young athlete, explained the contrast of having a sport ranking (运动成绩) as well as the welfare benefits, insurance that followed with the sport ranking:

Q: How did you arrive at BSU?²⁹³

A: I was recommended from my provincial team²⁹⁴

Q: How long have you been at BSU?²⁹⁵

A: Two years²⁹⁶

Q: Are you an undergrad student?²⁹⁷

A: I Haven't started college yet.²⁹⁸

²⁹³ 你是怎么来北体的?

²⁹⁴ 我从省队过来的, 被推荐过来的

²⁹⁵ 你现在的北体待多长时间呢?

²⁹⁶ 两年

²⁹⁷ 你现在是本科生吗?

²⁹⁸ 我现在没有上大学

Q: Are you still at high school?²⁹⁹

A: I have already graduated from high school. I am taking a break from studies.³⁰⁰

Q: Do you want to go to college at BSU? Yes, to get into college at BSU you will need sport ranking, right?³⁰¹

A: Yes, sport ranking is one element, to get sport ranking.[you] must be among the top three in the Chinese National Championship.³⁰²

Q: Is it difficult to be among the top-three?³⁰³

A: I think it is very difficult!³⁰⁴

Q: Yes, is it correct that if you are a full-time professional athlete... I don't quite understand... they will give u salary and insurance, right??³⁰⁵

S: Yes, first, if you are a full-time professional athlete, you will represent a provincial team. The provincial team will give you salary, and Medicare insurance, housing, these benefits.³⁰⁶

Q: So the difference between a full-time professional athlete and those who have no ranking is quite big?³⁰⁷

A: It is a huge difference!³⁰⁸

My study shows that sport ranking is the main factor for social mobility in the pyramid of athletes. A sport ranking provides the athlete with a monthly salary, insurance, as well as rights to a retirement settlement. Besides, athletes who obtain sport ranking do not need to take the college entrance exam (高考), but get into college based on an interview. To qualify for sport ranking an athlete has to be on the podium – gold, silver or bronze in a Chinese national championship, (国内锦标赛) or Champion competition (冠军赛).

Many of the retired athletes I interviewed had quite successful athletic careers. Most of them had been on a provincial team, and ten of them had represented the Chinese national team abroad.

299 还在读高中吗?

300 高中已经毕业了, 现在處於休學狀態。

301 你想上北体吗? 还是看你有没有运动成绩?

302 这个可能跟成绩有关系, 需要拿到全国前三名

303 啊, 这个难不难? (拿到全国三名)

304 非常难!

305 啊, 你现在算一个正式运动员还是, 这个我不知道什么解释, 就是, 他们会有的人说正式运动员有保险,

306 恩, 首先, 如果是正式运动员的话, 在你的各自的省市, 它会给你一些工资, 这些, 或者是医疗保险啊, 住房公积金, 这些福利待遇

307 没有成绩的运动员跟有成绩的差距很大吗?

308 差距很大....

There is also a system with competitive incentives at the BSU which influences the quality of food that the athletes can eat. Athletes with sport ranking (运动成绩) eat at the restaurant on the third floor of the canteen. Athletes among the top eight in the national games eat on the second floor. The rest of the athletes without any ranking eat on the first floor.

6.7.1. The dropout – a story of Zhao Feng

Among the athletes I interviewed, Zhao Feng and Zhang Yi Hui are dropouts. Zhao Feng stayed for three years at the BSU and had just quit training when I interviewed him. I asked Feng why he chose to retire.

M: When did you retire?³⁰⁹

F: In January 2014. I just retired. I don't dare to talk about it, "retirement", this word I don't want to use it, just say I quit training.³¹⁰

M: Why did you retire? Was it your own choice? Were there any other reasons for it?³¹¹

F: I just want to get into college. Just because of this issue and some other [issues], I got into a conflict with the coach; at that time I did not feel good. I couldn't communicate with the coach, this led to lot of bad emotions, a lot of stuff happened, this [retirement] issue is very complicated.³¹²

M: During your time at BSU, did you go to high school?³¹³

F: When I started training at BSU, I did not go to class, only training. When I started training I was still very young, my physical ability was not strong, I couldn't train, I just needed to rest (skipped class).³¹⁴

M: When you arrived at BSU, what kind of difficulties did you encounter?³¹⁵

F: Training was ok, but mentally was a little bit [though] because I did not have any introduction to taekwondo. When I arrived, Zhi Peng²¹ suffered a serious knee injury. Witnessing his injury, at that time when I just started training influenced me. The golden age of a Chinese athlete is between 20-24, if you get injured you are finished.³¹⁶

M: If you are a young athlete without sport ranking and get injured, [the motherland] no one cares about you?³¹⁷

W: Yes, when I got injured, I had to pay my bills because I did not have sport ranking.³¹⁸

309 你什么时候退役的?

310 14年1月份, 刚退役, 退役了不敢说, 退役这词不敢用, 就是不练了吧

311 是你自己决定不练了吗? 还是其他原因?

312 就想考大学, 就因为这件事与级别教练起了冲突, 那时心情不好, 也没与教练沟通带着消极情绪, 发生了很多事, 这件事很复杂

313 你那时候是在北体读高中?

314 我就进北体一年吧, 我那时候就开始训练, 没有上课.

315 你刚来有碰到什么困难?

316 训练没有, 心理上有点, 因为没接触过, 一来就看到张东岳腿断了, 他刚把石膏拆了, 开始恢复, 我就看到他受伤, 那时候我还没开始练就看到受伤, 心理上就有阴影, 中国黄金年龄就二十岁到二十四岁, 那时如果受伤就没了

317 如果你是年纪小的运动员, 没什么成绩, 如果你伤国家不会管你吗?

318 是, 我受伤的时候, 自己要付钱, 因为没有运动成绩

Zhang Fang did not give any explanation for why he quit training, but I sensed a big conflict between him and the coaches at BSU. He also relieved the vulnerability of the group of athletes with no sport ranking. Since all welfare benefits are associated to the province of the full-time professional athlete represents (正式运动员), young athletes without sport ranking is much more vulnerable to injury, as BSU only provide free accommodation and training. When I asked all the young athletes if they had insurance. They did not know, and injury was a major concern for athletes in this group.

6.8. The pyramid of Norwegian Athletes

Illustration 6.3 shows the pyramid of the Norwegian taekwondo athletes. The Norwegian team also has competitive elements to encourage athletes to work harder. The National team have a three-level system; *focus*, *challenge* and a *high-school* group.

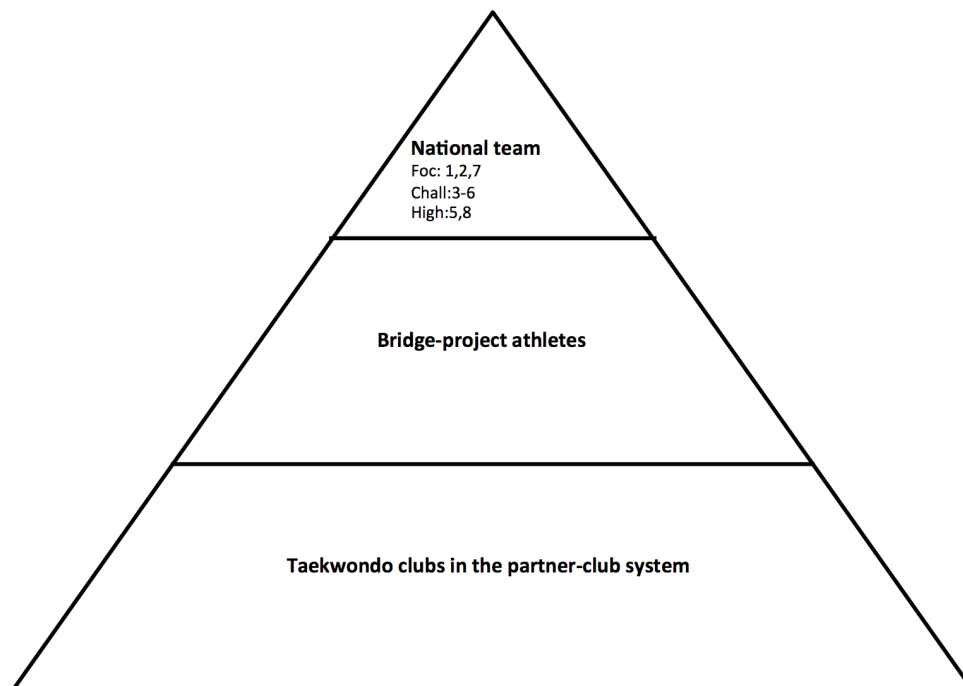


Illustration 6.3: Pyramid of the Norwegian taekwondo athletes. Designed by the author.

Athletes in the *focus* group – have two individual one-to-one sessions with the head coach per week. They get a full salary of 5000 NOK per month and all competitions is fully funded by NKF. The athletes in the *challenge* group get 2500 NOK a month, and five fully covered competitions a year. Athletes in the *high-school* group combine education and training and are found qualified to be on the national team. They get selected to competitions by the national team coach which are fully-funded by NKF. All athletes on the national team is covered by a sports insurance designed for elite athletes, as well as having the medical team as OLT at their disposal.

The national team coach told me that all athletes would be evaluated continuously – and could move up and down between *focus* and *challenge* groups, depending on their performance in competitions and daily training. Monica, Joe, and Julie have taken medals in official championships and have B-scholarships (75000 NOK) allocated from the OLT (see Appendix B).³¹⁹

The Chinese and Norwegian system both have competitive incentives to encourage athletes to train harder. All young unranked Chinese athletes I interviewed stressed the importance of obtaining sport ranking. It will not only secure them welfare benefits, insurance, retirement settlement, but also an opportunity to get into college. The Norwegian athletes all have insurance and a medical team from the OLT – the single biggest difference between the *focus* and *challenge* groups is in terms of economy.

6.9. Observation of Training Session at BSU

I observed the afternoon session which started 15.00. At 14.30 I took the subway from Wudaokou (五道口) one stop to Shangdi (上地). I walked to the north gate of BSU and entered the campus. I crossed past the training facility and headed towards the male dormitory. I waited about 10 minutes and then athletes started to come out in pair. I paired up with Pei Hong Li. Everyone marched (集合) in accordance with the *Training Discipline and Management Rules*, rule number 1 – quietly and neatly in pairs towards the training facility. I whispered to him; “Do the team usually walk together to training?” He whispered back: “Yes, we are a team, before each session we will meet downstairs and walk together to the training facility.”

When we entered the reception of the training facility; the guard approached me and asked if I was with the team. Pei Hong Li replied; “he is a friend and he is a former athlete at BSU and has arranged a meeting with the coach”. The guard let me in. Drawing on Shogan's concept the *disciplinary technologies of sport*³²⁰ – the BSU's rules of not permitting anyone besides the athletes, coaches and staff is a form of *enclosure*³²¹ of the training facilities. I used Pei Hong Li as a *gatekeeper*, through him I gained access to the training facilities. We walked to the elevator and went to the third floor. The *disciplinary* boundary of the training ground is clearly marked as bowed (鞠躬) before entering the training ground (训练馆). I sat down on the bench and Pei Hong Li joined the rest of the team. They athletes sat in groups talking and stretching out. About 14.55 a female and a male coach entered the training grounds. Soon

319 http://www.olympiatoppen.no/om_olympiatoppen/stoetteordninger/individuell_utoeverstipend/page5457.html

320 Shogan, *The Making of High Performance Athletes*, 18.

321 Ibid., 23.

after, the female team captain, a tall young girl gave a signal, everybody formed 5 lines with approximately 4-5 athletes in each line. The team captain gave the orders and started the warm up. The warm up routine was more or less the same routine I had during my stay at BSU 8 years ago and lasted about 20 minutes, after the warm up was finished, the athletes formed a big circle and the team captain started stretching. During the warm-up I rushed over to greet the coaches, I talked a bit with the female coach (my former coach and whom I meet her during my first stay in the summer). I explained I was back to finish the work for my thesis. She was interesting in my thesis, and I explained I was doing a comparative study between the Chinese and Norwegian elite taekwondo systems. During the warm up, the coaches more or less did not mind the athletes, who were led by the young female team captain.



Illustration 6.4: Situation based exercise. The athlete with the double chest protector plays the offensive role. The other athlete plays the role of the counter attacker. He/she has to move around the ring (marked in blue), as well as counterattack with the right timing and technique. The exercise illustrates Shogan's concepts of constraint on movement, as the athletes have to move around within the blue marked area. The beginner team (小队) is drilling the basic roundhouse kick in the background of the picture. The red banner in the background; 勤学苦练 qínxué kǔliàn, "study diligently and train hard" and 为国争光 wéiguó zhēngguāng "win glory for the nation". Photo taken by the author.

After the stretching was finished, the team was divided into two groups – *partitioned*, dividing the group after their level of *skill*. A group called beginner team (小队); about ten young athletes went with a short Korean coach who had entered the training ground during the warm up. The athletes paired up started drilling the basic roundhouse kick on kick pads. The Korean coach had a Chinese translator with him who explained as best she could, the technical aspect to the youngsters. The Korean coach went around without the translator

correcting the young athletes, showing them the proper movement of the basic roundhouse kick. As I observed, he was encouraging the athletes and guiding them. During the session of 2.5 hours, they only practiced this one technique – the basic roundhouse kick. The only variation was changing between right and left leg – The beginner team's session, illustrates Shogan concept of *repetition*³²² of athletic skill as a key for training the unskilled young athletes.

At the same time, the Chinese male coach explained in brief the content of today's afternoon session to the experienced team (大队). The athletes padded themselves up with chest, arm and leg protector, a few athletes put on a head guard. Everybody paired up according to size and weight (级别), - in Shogans term according their *function* and *rank* in the experienced team (大队) and started the exercise. The exercise was situation based; one athlete had an offensive role wearing the double chest protector (see illustration 6.4) and the counterpart should move and counterattack accordingly. The female coach was entering her coach-mode – observing and correcting Pei Hong Yi and another male athlete. She carried a padded stick occasionally when she was not happy with the athletes performance she hit the athlete on the buttocks. I asked the Pei Hong about this; he explained that it did not hurt because of the padding on the stick, and this punishment (挨罚) was only a reminder (提醒) to do better. In Foucauldian terms, the coach use punishment as encouragement to execute the training drill *correctly*. Once in a while the male coach would gather all the athletes, adding new elements to the exercise. Before a new exercise, the team captain cheered out: “Come on, beiti team” (北体队加油!) The group would scream out as a response to motivate each other.

One of the explanations of the pretty harsh coaching method of the Chinese coaches traces back to 1963 and the training methods of the People's Army – “hard, disciplined, intensive training and practice according to battle.”³²³ In 1964 these slogans became the mantra of Chinese coaching, conceptualized as the three non-afraids – “not being afraid of hardships, difficulty or injury – and five toughness; toughness of spirit, body, skill, training and competition.”³²⁴ Even though, since the 1980s there has been emphasis has on scientific training methods, sports science, medicine and investment in upgrading the training facilities, the three 'non-afraids' and 'five toughness' coaching method is still very much the ideology in the daily of training elite athletes in China.³²⁵ This is known as to “eat bitter” (吃苦) which is internalized in the Chinese athletes from an early age.

322 Ibid., 25.

323 Hong, Wu, and Xiong, “Beijing Ambitions,” 517.

324 Ibid.

325 Ibid.

The training lasted about 2.5 hours. At approximately 17.30 the athletes started warming down, the athletes at the beginner team continued their technical session. Some of the older athletes from the experienced team (大队) went around helping the youngsters. After a while, the male coach gathered everyone to discuss today's sessions. He was not happy with the total effort of the team (训练状态). This communication was one-way, the female coach would take over criticizing the team even harsher. The athletes did not reply do the harsh comments. After a summary, the athletes bowed (鞠躬) and then saluted the Chinese flag. I asked Pei Hong Li if the coach was angry at everyone. He explained to me that he wasn't, just a couple of athletes, but since everyone is part of a team, everybody is responsible to ensure a good training mood (训练状态).

6.10. Conclusion

This chapter has analyzed how taekwondo athletes in the China and Norway gets introduced to the sport, and then the transformed into a docile elite taekwondo athletes. According to this study, In China, the coach from BSU travel to local sports schools around China (体校) to search for potential bodies (身体条件) suited for taekwondo. Height and long legs are important (身高和腿长) factors. After a potential athlete get selected (被教练选) or recommended (被推荐) from a local sport-school, the athlete has a trial period (自训时间) of 2-3 months. In this period the athlete must display his/her talent for the coach, and show a will to “eat bitter” (吃苦) – to endure long and hard training session. In this docility process, the older athletes (老队员), team captains (队长) functions as a semi-watchmen. They take care (照顾) of the new athletes, - meaning helping them to adjust to the team rules (队伍管理), the weekly timetable and support them during sessions.

In Norway, both the process of becoming and how the athletes get introduced to the sport is different. All the Norwegian athletes I interviewed started training taekwondo at a hobby level and developed an interest and love for the sport. This dedication fits well to Foucault's concept of *The Technology of the Self*, this ensures the Norwegian athletes to be self-governed. When Norwegian athletes get selected to the national team, - they have already been training for many years, the transformation into an elite athlete is a long time development.

The weekly timetable is a panoptic tool of surveillance and control. At BSU, the daily evening call (点名) and the curfew put restrictions on the athletes. In Norway, the athlete's daily training sessions intensity, are monitored by the check my level application.

The written team rules and the unwritten four big mistakes (四个大错误) constitute the team rules (队伍管理). The written team rules can be divided into two groups, the BSU Taekwondo Team Training Discipline and Management Rules is primarily connected to the disciplinary spaces confined to the training grounds. The other four sheets of written rules (see Appendix B) relates to athletes hygiene requirements at the training ground and the dormitory, economy and dining requirements. The four big mistakes (四个大错误) put considerable social constraints on the Chinese athlete.

The older ranked athletes(老队员) are *hybrid*,- resisting the unwritten team rules, using subtle strategies to have fun in (偷偷地玩儿) and dating in secret (偷偷地谈恋爱). In addition, the older athletes on the team are given a little space of freedom (一点空间). However, the athletes cannot be “too over” (太过分), as the coach often thinks that dating (谈恋爱) will influence the training.

The weekly team meeting primary function is to summarize the week of training (总结这周的训练). In cases, where athletes are caught, breaking one of the four big mistakes, (四个大错误) the athlete will first receive a psychical punishment (挨罚), followed by writing a self-criticism and then reading it out for the group.

The pyramid of the Chinese and Norwegian taekwondo athletes, analyzes the competitive incentives in both systems. In China, the largest difference is between unranked (没有运动成绩的) and ranked athletes (有运动成绩的). In Norway is organized in a flexible three level system; - *focus*, *challenge* and *high-school*.

The observation of the training session at BSU illustrates the disciplinary technologies of the training ground. The athletes are divided – partitioned into two groups; beginner team (小队) – with unskilled athletes and the experienced team (大队) – with ranked and talented skilled athletes. Then the athletes are further paired according to the *rank* and *function* – according to their size and weight class (级别).

The coaching method utilized by the coaches is punishment as a tool to correct a technical mistake committed by an athlete. The fear the physical punishment, according to Foucault should encourage the athlete to act normal – meaning to perform according to the high standard set by the coach (得到教练的要求).

7. Conclusion

In the concluding remarks of this thesis I will take another look at the research questions put forth in the introduction: *How do the Chinese and Norwegian elite sports systems impose social control over elite taekwondo athletes, and how the athletes cope with living in these systems?*

The selection process of athletes in China and Norway has been a key focal point in this work. It relates to how the athletes get introduced to their sport, as well as the transformation from a common youth into an elite athlete. The *juguo tizhi* and the scheme of selection of athletes are effective in locating suitable (身体条件) bodies and in producing top athletes. The full consequences of this selection system are not known. There are many unknown fates among the majority of unranked athletes at the bottom of the pyramid. In 2004, including all kinds of sport, there were approximatively 400,000 young male and female athletes training in more than 3000 local sports schools in China.³²⁶ In the Chinese pyramid of athletes, only 5 percent reach the national team, and the rest are left without formal education.³²⁷ This important topic needs more research.

Norway, on the other hand, has a conservative law; the Regulation of Children Sports, which prohibits early age specialization. This has a strong preemptive effect on the development of top athletes in Norway, since elite athletic skills require a long-time process spanning many years.

The concept of panopticism combined with my case study has been utilised to map out the structures of surveillance and control. These are different between the two systems, as indeed most of the structures surrounding the athletes are different. In China, the system can be characterized as effective, but also rigid and strict, the last two of which cause some of the older, ranked athletes to challenge and manipulate it.

I have conceptualized the Chinese coach at the BSU as the *watchman* in the tower of the Panopticon, who always monitors and observes the athlete both during training sessions, and outside the training grounds by unannounced room-inspections (查房) in the dormitory. The older athletes (老队员) function as semi watchmen who both monitor and take care (照顾) of the new athletes, helping them in their docility process. The latter is a process which involves adjusting to the team rules and learning the weekly timetable.

³²⁶ Dai quoted in Hong, "China," 41.

³²⁷ Ibid.

The effect of panopticism is a process of self-surveillance, in the sense that everyone watches and may be watched by someone else.

In China, the coach is also an authority of punishment. Athletes who make one of the four big mistakes (四个大错误): breaking the curfew (夜不归宿), dating within the team (不允许谈恋爱), smoking or drinking (不允许抽烟喝酒), and get caught, will be punished physically (挨罚) and rehabilitated through a process of a written self-criticism (件套). During the weekly meeting reading, the self-criticism is read out in public as a warning for other athletes in the group. In Foucault's own terms, this is in order to “correct abnormal behaviour”.

This thesis has also shed light on the nuances of the hierarchical system of the Chinese pyramid of athletes. In spite of the system's rigidity, there is some room for negotiation between athletes and coaches, as some of the older athletes with sport ranking (运动成绩) are given some degree of personal freedom (一点空间).

The Norwegian athletes, on the other hand, are under lighter forms of surveillance. The athletes have a team of nutrition experts from Olympiatoppen (OLT) at their disposal, whose prime function is to monitor the athletes' weight and health. The Norwegian head coach also monitors the athletes daily training intensity electronically, by using the Check My Level app. *The Technology of the Self* has been used to describe the Norwegian taekwondo elite athletes' dedication to their sport. The Norwegian system is much more effective than the Chinese in producing self-governed athletes, but less so in reaching advanced technical skills at an early age.

This thesis can contribute to a new understanding of the processes of transformation and conformity of the elite athlete. The transformation includes actors, structures, rules and regulations reaching outside of the *Disciplinary Technologies of Sport* associated with the training facility. At the BSU, these structures are the weekly timetable and the curfew which function as tools of surveillance and control. The actors are the coach and older athletes who function as *watchmen*. In Norway, the structures are the nutrition and health teams, as well as the coach, but the level of surveillance and control is relatively mild.

The thesis has also addressed the significant *hybridity* present in ranked athletes (运动成绩), who use subtle methods to challenge unwritten team rules (队伍规矩).

References

- Augestad, Pål, Nils Asle Bergsgard, Atle O. Hansen, and others. "The Institutionalization of an Elite Sport Organization in Norway-The Case of Olympiatoppen." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 23, no. 3 (2006): 293.
- Augestad, Pål, and Nils Asle Bergsgard. "Norway." In *Comparative Elite Sport Development*, edited by Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green, 194–217. Burlington, MA, USA: Routledge, 2008.
- . *Toppidrettens Formel*. Oslo: Novus Forlag, 2007.
- Bakken, Børge. *The Exemplary Society: Human Improvement, Social Control, and the Dangers of Modernity in China*. Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Bingham, Jerry, and Simon Shibli. *The Global Sporting Arms Race: An International Comparative Study on Sports Policy Factors Leading to International Sporting Success*. Meyer & Meyer Verlag, 2008.
- Bosscher, Veerle De, Jerry Bingham, and Simon Shibli. *The Global Sporting Arms Race: An International Comparative Study on Sports Policy Factors Leading to International Sporting Success*. Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2008.
- Brownell, Susan. *Training the Body for China: Sports in the Moral Order of the People's Republic*. 1 edition. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Chapman, Gwen E. "Making Weight: Lightweight Rowing, Technologies of Power, and Technologies of the Self." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 14 (1997): 205–23.
- Cole, Cheryl L. "Resisting the Canon: Feminist Cultural Studies, Sport, and Technologies of the Body." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 17, no. 2 (August 1, 1993): 77–97.
- Creswell, John W. *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. SAGE Publications, 2012.
- Duncan, Margaret Carlisle. "The Politics of Women's Body Images and Practices: Foucault, the Panopticon, and Shape Magazine." *Journal of Sport & Social Issues* 18, no. 1 (February 1, 1994): 48–65.
- Fan, Hong. "Innocence Lost: Child Athletes in China." Edited by Fan Fan, Hong. *Sport in Society* 7, no. 3 (September 1, 2004): 338–54.
- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Translated by Alan Sheridan. New York: Penguin Books, 1977.
- Foucault, Michel, Luther H. Martin, Huck Gutman, and Patrick H. Hutton. *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault*. University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.
- Fraser, Nancy. *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory*. University of Minnesota Press, 1989.
- Gerring, John. *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework*. Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Green, Mick, and Ben Oakley. "Elite Sport Development Systems and Playing to Win: Uniformity and Diversity in International Approaches." *Leisure Studies* 20, no. 4 (January 1, 2001): 247–67.
- Heikkala, Juha, and others. "Discipline and Excel: Techniques of the Self and Body and the Logic of Competing." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 10 (1993): 397–397.
- Hong, Fan. "China." In *Comparative Elite Sport Development*, edited by Barrie Houlihan and Mick Green, 26–52. Burlington, MA, USA: Routledge, 2008.
- Hong Fan, L. Zhouxiang, Fan. "From Barcelona to Athens (1992–2004): 'Juguo Tizhi' and China's Quest for Global Power and Olympic Glory." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 113–31.
- Hong, Fan, Ping Wu, and Huan Xiong. "Beijing Ambitions: An Analysis of the Chinese Elite Sports System and Its Olympic Strategy for the 2008 Olympic Games." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 22, no. 4 (July 1, 2005): 510–29. doi:10.1080/09523360500126336.

- Johns, David P., and Jennifer S. Johns. "SURVEILLANCE, SUBJECTIVISM AND TECHNOLOGIES OF POWER An Analysis of the Discursive Practice of High-Performance Sport." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 35, no. 2 (June 1, 2000): 219–34.
- Jones, R. L., N. Glintmeyer, and A. McKenzie. "Slim Bodies, Eating Disorders and the Coach-Athlete Relationship A Tale of Identity Creation and Disruption." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 40, no. 3 (September 1, 2005): 377–91.
- Kvale, Steinar. *Det Kvalitative Forskningsintervju*. Oslo: Ad Notam Gyldendal, 1997.
- Ling, Zhang, and Fan Hong. "After the Glory: Elite Athletes' Re-Employment in China." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 31, no. 6 (February 17, 2014): 635–51.
- Markula, Pirkko. "Firm but Shapely, Fit but Sexy, Strong but Thin: The Postmodern Aerobicizing Female Bodies." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12 (1995): 424–53.
- Markula, Pirkko, and Richard Pringle. *Foucault, Sport and Exercise: Power, Knowledge and Transforming the Self*. New Ed edition. New York, NY: Routledge, 2006.
- Marshall, James D. "Governmentality Studies in Education." In *Michel Foucault on Power: From the Disciplinary Society to Security*, edited by Michael Peters, A. C. Besley, and Mark Olssen, 604. Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2009.
- Rail, Geneviève, and Jean Harvey. "Body at Work: Michel Foucault and the Sociology of Sport." *Sociology of Sport Journal* 12 (1995): 164–69.
- Sæther, Elin. "Fieldwork as Coping and Learning." In *Doing Fieldwork In China*, edited by Maria Heimer and Stig Thøgersen, 322. University of Hawaii Press, 2006.
- Schoenhals, Martin. *The Paradox of Power in a People's Republic of China Middle School*. M.E. Sharpe, 1993.
- Shogan, Debra. *The Making of High Performance Athletes: Discipline, Diversity, and Ethics*. Toronto ; Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
- Silverman, David. *Doing Qualitative Research*. SAGE, 2010.
- . *Interpreting Qualitative Data*. SAGE, 2011.
- "Sport and Politics in the 1980s: The Olympic Strategy." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 29, no. 1 (January 1, 2012): 74–97.
- Tan, Tien-Chin, and Mick Green. "Analysing China's Drive for Olympic Success in 2008." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, no. 3 (February 1, 2008): 314–38.
- Wei, Fan, Fan Hong, and Lu Zhouxiang. "Chinese State Sports Policy: Pre- and Post-Beijing 2008." *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 14–15 (September 1, 2010): 2380–2402.
- Whitby, Dennis. "Elite Sport." In *Sport and Physical Education in China*, edited by James Riordan and Robin E. Jones, 120–42. London, England: Taylor & Francis, 1999.

Appendix A: Interview guides

Interview guide: Chinese athletes

I: General background

1. 你的名字（在论文中，我会用化名） 1.2 性别：男 / 女
2. 你今年多大了？
3. 你家乡在哪里？
4. 你现在做什么工作？
5. 你的家庭背景是怎么样的？
6. 你从什么时候开始的进行专业训练的？
7. 你为什么选择进行专业练跆拳道呢？
8. 一般来说，专业运动员是什么来北体的？他们是什么被选择的？你是什么来北体的？
9. 你什么时候退役的？是你自己决定退役吗？你为什么退役？
10. 你还有其他运动专长吗？
11. 你在北京体育大学练了多久跆拳道？
12. 你以前待过国家队吗？多久？（你以前是国家队队员么）
13. 你毕业的时候拿到毕业证书了么？你的毕业是什么？
14. 你训练的时候上课吗？体育课？英文课等等？上其他的课吗？对教练来说训练还是读书最重要呢？

II: Living conditions and daily routine

1. 你以前训练的日程怎么安排的？你们几点起床，吃早饭，几点开始训练，等等
2. 一个星期之内你们会休息几天？

3. 你在北体训练之外的活动包括什么？比如说开会等等 4. 你们的宿舍有挂室舍长吗？你们几个人住一个房间？ 你以前当过舍长么？

4.资深的运动员负责照顾（训练，生活）新人吗？

5.资深的运动员对新人有责任吗？你负责过新的人吗？

6. 教练每天晚上会去宿舍看你们吗？ 教练晚上会点名吗？ 教练会看你们的手机吗？

7.教练对资深运动员怎么样？

III: Rules, regulations, self-criticism

下个部分我想问你关于北体对于运动员的规定。

比如说， 运动员不能恋爱，不能喝酒，不能抽烟， 饮食等等？

你们在北体有什么规定？想简单说一下。

1. 你在北体的时候谈过恋爱？ 如果被教练发现，会怎么样？ 你有没有法去偷偷的去恋爱呢？

2. 教练对年龄小的运动员怎么样？ 在規定上

3. 教练对成熟的运动怎么样？ 在規定上

4. 你抽烟吗？ 如果被教练发现会怎么样？

5. 教练有时候会让你们出去玩儿吗？ 让你们喝酒吗？ 比赛结束？

6. 如果你太晚会宿舍，被教练发现，会怎么样？

7. 比赛结束，教练会让你们休息吗？ 比赛的结果会影响你的薪水吗？ 比赛的结果会让你们多几天的放假吗？ 一年以内你们几天放假？ 一年以内你们能回家吗？ 比如说过年的时候？

8. 国家队的规定跟北体不一样吗？

IV: Conflict, self-criticism and self-evaluation

1. 如果一个运动员跟教练发生冲突，有什么解决的方式？你本身与教练发生冲突吗？你知道有没有运动员因为发生冲突，而要离开北体吗？
2. 运动员与运动员发生冲突有什么解决方式？你与别的运动员发生冲突吗？为什么？有什么解决的方式？
3. 你知道有没有运动员因为不按照学校的规定而要离开北体吗？比如说因为谈恋爱，成绩不好，表现的不好）为什么？其他的原因吗？
4. 训练的时候，教练如果运动员表现不好的话，会处罚吗？为什么？教练什么处罚？
5. 你本身训练的时候被教练处罚吗？为什么？
6. 运动员要写自评检讨？你写过这一类的东西吗？你对这一类的东西有什么看法，（你觉得有用吗？
7. 写自我检讨的过程是怎样的？
8. 写了检讨或者自我鉴定后你会发生什么变化么？
9. 优秀的运动员跟一般的运动员工作的机会是一样吗？

V: Sport ranking

1. 你们北体运动员有分成绩吗？
3. 请你解释运动成绩是什么？
4. 你的运动成绩会影响你的薪水吗？运动成绩系对你本身有什么影响？
5. 运动员退役之后一般会参加什么样的工作？优秀的运动员跟一般的运动员工作的机会是一样吗？
6. 现在的规定跟你们时代一样吗？为什么不一样？

Interview guide: Norwegian athletes

I: General Background Information

1. Name?
2. Age?
3. Hometown?
4. Occupation?
5. When did you start training taekwondo?
6. How important has your family been in terms of moral and economic support? Before you entered the national team? Your club and your club coach?

II: Selection process

1. When did you start training at an elite level? More than 18 hours per week?
2. When did you join the national team? How many years have you been on the national team?
3. On what kind of basis were you selected to the national team?

III: Living conditions and daily life

1. Can you map out a normal training week? When do you get up? Go to training? Study, rest etc. Give me a feeling of being a national team member for a week? Is it training every day?
2. Do you participate in other activities outside training? Study? Work?
3. Do NKF provide housing for the athletes? Is there one person in charge concerning hygiene, cleaning?
4. How are the household chores organized?
5. Do you have any curfew? Bedtime?

IV: Rules and regulations

1. What kind of rules and regulations do you have to follow on the national team? Think carefully. All aspects of your training, social life, etc, drinking, dating?
2. Do you have any rules concerning nutrition, diet, etc..?
3. How is the national team coach? Is he strict, fair? Please describe your coach
4. Is there a ranking system at the national team? On what criteria are the athletes ranked?

5. Is your salary fixed or performance based? Do you receive scholarship from Olympiatoppen? How did you get it, and for how long will you have it?
6. Is there conflict between athletes on the team? How do you resolve a potential conflict? Have there been a conflict between an athlete and a coach? Is there any kind of punishment during training? Oral, physical etc.
7. Is dating within the team prohibited?
8. Have athletes on the national team been expelled because of violation of rules and regulations? Poor result, lack of progress? ETC.
9. Does your professional life (as an athlete) come in conflict with your private life? dating, social activities
10. Do athletes have to write a training diary? Do you write one? Do you have to write a report/evaluation after a competition?
11. What is the 24 hour athlete? What kind of model is it? Do the national team use this concept?
12. In Norway elite sport, there is a huge emphasis two career model, education and training full time? and Is there a conflict between a professional athletes wishes and education, and private life?
13. Do you feel lack of professionalism is a problem among athletes who want to be on the national team? They have it in their mouth but not ready to live the life of a 24 hour athlete?
14. Do NKF use the concept 24 hour athlete? What does mean to you?
15. Do you worry about the future? Are you thinking about the life after you finished with elite sport? Do you feel that NKF, OTL are giving you advice about the life after retirement from the sport?

Interview guide: Norwegian coach

I: General Background Information

1. Name
2. Age
3. Hometown
4. Occupation
- 5 Education
6. Family background
7. When did you start training taekwondo? How long have you been a coach
8. Have you done other kind of sports before taekwondo? At a high level?

II: The athlete

1. How do NKF and you get select athletes for the national team? (what kind of criteria?)
2. Can you tell me what do NKF offer the athletes at the National Team? What do NKF provide athletes with?
3. What are the expectations you have for your athletes? What are the NKF expectations for the national team?
4. What kinds of rules and regulations are the athletes regulated to follow? Diet? Training? alcohol, smoking, ect.

III: Daily routine and Olympiatoppen

1. Can you map out a normal week for you and your athletes? When do you get up, trainings, meetings, lunch everything! Give me a sense of being the national team coach for a week? Very detailed!
2. Do you socialize with the athletes outside training?
3. Is the athlete's salary performance based or fixed? Your own salary? How many of the athletes have scholarship from Olympiatoppen? On what basis or requirements is the scholarship given?

4. How do NKF and you cooperate with Olympiatoppen? What services do Olympiatoppen provide? Is there any other actors in project Rio 2016?
5. Do Olympiatoppen have any influence over your funding? NKF? NIF?
6. Idrett for alle (sport for all) Do you see this concept as a barrier to early specialization and the development of elite taekwondo? How is it in the UK?
7. How do you cooperate with the local clubs? Can you explain the concept partnerclubs?
8. Do NKF use the concept 24 hour athlete? Do you encourage your athletes to study at the same time, being a full-time athlete? In short what is the 24 hour athlete in your perspective?
9. Do you feel lack of professionalism is a problem among athletes who want to be on the national team? They have it in their mouth but not ready to live the life of a 24 hour athlete?
10. In Norway elite sport, there is a huge emphasis two career model, education and training full time? Is there a conflict between a professional athletes wishes and education, and private life?
11. How do you resolve conflict between an athlete and a coach? Vis a vis athletes? What kind of conflicts?

IV: Elite Sport

1. How would you compare elite sport in Norway and China? Taekwondo? The UK?
2. How do you feel elite sport is going in the same direction comparatively between nations? A more centralized system?
3. What the main difference between elite sport in Norway compared to China in your view?
4. What is the biggest challenge of working in Norway?

Appendix B: Written team rules

北体大运动员财务管理制度

为了帮助运动员养成勤俭节约、艰苦朴素及良好的理财意识特制订以下制度。

- 1、运动员每个月按时从银行卡中取出规定的钱数，作为当月的零用金，不得出现私下多取现象。
- 2、运动员每月的零用金包括：日常生活用品和一些相应的支出。如果有队员需要多领取费用，要如实跟教练讲明，在教练同意的情况下，方可取钱。
- 3、运动员之间不得私下相互借钱现象，如有问题出现，经教练组查明，将给予严厉处理。

北体大跆拳道队
2014年7月20日

Beiti (BSU) Athletes Financial Management System

In order to help the athletes to cultivate a “work hard and plan living life style”, the following rules are made.

1. Athletes must every month on time, take out the fixed amount of money [and if necessary make account for [that] month of pocket money. [Athletes] must not take out more money.
2. The monthly pocket money should cover daily necessities and some other expenses. If some athletes need to take out more money [for] expenses [he/she] has to discuss this with the coach, and only with the coaches' permission can he/she take out more money.
3. Athletes must not borrow money between each other. If this occurs the coaches will investigate and give a severe punishment accordingly.

北体大跆拳道队食堂就餐要求

为了让运动员养成爱惜粮食、尊重他人劳动成果的良好习惯，特制定以下用餐要求，所有运动员必须严格执行。

- 1、衣着整洁，不得袒胸露背，禁止穿拖鞋入内。
- 2、按秩序排队就餐，公共场合禁止喧哗。
- 3、爱惜粮食，不许浪费。
- 4、餐后餐具按类摆放，便于工作人员清洗。
- 5、任何人不得借故将食品带出餐厅，如需带饭要经过工作人员同意。

北体大跆拳道队
2014年7月20日

BSU Taekwondo Team Canteen Dining Requirements

To ensure and cultivate the athlete's appreciation for food, all the athletes has to follow and carry out the canteen requirements listed below.

1. [Athletes must] have clean clothes, it is prohibited to wear clothes that expose the body. Slippers are not allowed in the dining hall.
2. Keep order when waiting in line for food. Loud noises are prohibited.
3. Cherish the food, it is not allowed to food go to waste.
4. After you finished eating, and to make it convenient [for] the canteen workers. Short the dinner set correctly.
5. It is not allowed to take food outside the canteen, [if] you must take-away you will first have to get the permission from a canteen worker.

训练馆卫生要求

为了营造良好的训练环境,保证运动员的训练处于良好的和状态,特制定以下规定,所有队员必须严格执行。

- 1、训练结束后,值日队员负责打扫馆内卫生,摆放训练其才。
- 2、其他队员要注意个人衣物、鞋、杂物摆放整齐。
- 3、自觉保持场地的干净整洁,不穿非跆拳道鞋进入训练场地。
- 4、个人训练器材及时清洗,保持无异味。

北体大跆拳道队
2014年7月20日

The Hygiene Requirement of the [BSU] Training Facility

In order to create a good training environment, the athletes must carry out the following [rules]:

1. After the training session is over, the athletes on duty are responsible to clean the training ground and put the training equipment in order.
2. Other teammates must pay attention to their own clothes, shoes and other things that must be put in order.
3. Be aware to ensure a clean and tidy training ground, do not wear other shoes than taekwondo shoes when entering the training ground.
4. The individual training equipment must be washed in time and maintain a clean smell.
5. The hygiene requirement of (BSU) training facility

宿舍卫生要求

为了保障运动员的身体健康和睡眠恢复，营造良好舒适的休息环境，特制定以下条例，所有运动员必须严格遵守。

- 1、 床铺整齐、干净，被子叠好。
- 2、 衣物、鞋、杂物摆放整齐。
- 3、 桌面清洁，物品摆放整齐。
- 4、 地面干净、清洁无杂物。
- 5、 窗户明亮洁净，屋内无异味。

北体大跆拳道队
2014 年 7 月 20 日

The Hygiene Requirement of the [BSU] Dormitory

To ensure [the athletes] good health, sleep and recovery and to create a good resting environment, all the athletes must follow the regulations below:

1. The bed must be tidy, clean and the quilt must be folded
2. Clothes, shoes and other items must be put in order.
3. The desk [must be] clean, all items must be put neatly in order.
4. The floor must be clean, no trash [on the floor]
5. The windows [should be] bright and clean. The room should be free of bad smell.

Appendix C: Overview of Empirical data

Overview of Chinese Informants

Subject	Age	SR	PT	NT	A	C	HS	MS	MAS	G
Zhi You ¹	17				*		*			
Wang Peng ²	16				*		*			
Gao Li ³	15				*			*		
Yu Hua ⁴	17	*		*	*	*				
Yu Zhang ⁵	26	*	*		*	*				
Pei Hong Yi ⁶	19				*					
Xiao Gao ⁷	20				*		*			
Zhang Long ⁸	25	*	*		*				*	
Wang Li ⁹	25				*			*		
Chen Li ¹⁰	30	*	*	*		*				*
Yong En ¹¹	28	*	*			*				*
Zheng Hao ¹²	26	*	*	*					*	
Ou Yang ¹³	30	*	*			*				
Li Peng ¹⁴	30	*	*							*
Ye Zhi Hui ¹⁵	29	*	*	*					*	
Ye Fang ¹⁶	27	*	*	*						*
Zhu Hua ¹⁷	27	*	*	*		*				
Cheng Fang ¹⁸	27	*	*							
Nie Yong ¹⁹	29	*	*	*		*				*
Manlou ²⁰	28	*	*	*		*				
Zhi Peng ²¹	30	*	*	*					*	
Zhao Feng ²²	18							*		
Zhou Jie Ke ²³	17	*	*		*					
Gao Feng ²⁴	29	*	*	*		*				*
Zhang Yi Hui ²⁵	27						*			

SR= Sport ranking 运动成绩 PR=Provincial team NT=National team A=Active athletes C=College HS=High-school MS=Middle school G=Graduated

Overview of Norwegian Informants

I conducted interviews with the athletes marked with bold.

Subject	Age	Scholarship	Challenge	Focus	HS	Male	College
Monica ¹	21	B		*			
Julie²	23	B		*			*
Peter³	25		*			*	
Joseph⁴	21		*			*	
Mikael ⁵	18				*	*	
Robert ⁶	25					*	
Joe⁷	20	B		*		*	
Norah ⁸	18				*		

Scholarship= Scholarship from OLT HS=High-School